

JUDAISM

The Promise of Land & the Reign of Peace

A Compendium of Articles

**Some of which are also in the book:
“The Now Coming Reign of Peace”.**

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HUBERT LUNS

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This collection grapples with the complex relationship between Judaism, Christianity, and historical anti-Semitism, exploring theological interpretations and their impact. It examines Biblical texts often cited to justify Jew-hatred, emphasizing the importance of historical context. The texts further discuss the concept of a future ‘Reign of Peace’, the return of the Jewish people to their ancestral land, and venture in various theological debates, including the nature of the divine covenants and the Holy Trinity. Additionally, the sources touch upon the history of Zionism, Christian support for Israel, and interpretations of prophecy concerning the end times and final redemption.

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The author is emeritus pastor in the Protestant Church in the Netherlands

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THE THEOLOGICAL ROOTS OF JEW-HATRED



by Max Nathans (the star shown, once belonged to his father)

The history of the persecution of Jews is indisputably partly rooted in an anti-Judaic theology. Church writings provided Jew-haters with arguments for their wrongdoings. On top of this, a remarkable dichotomy in the Jewish people, called the cutting-off, caused a degeneration within Judaism, which led to evil practices that caused the Jews to incur the wrath of those around them. Official measures of secession were not always unwarranted. It remains a difficult and thorny issue. What is certain is that before God's people arrive at their destiny, a catharsis (purification) will be required. A catharsis can never be decided for anyone else; let Christendom focus on its own catharsis, that of misdirected theology, which has produced so much bitter fruit. When the time is right, the Jew will do his own catharsis.

1 – The 'justified' motive for Jew-hatred

Many see the Holocaust as a one-off incident, the result of a series of miserable events after World War I that were not responded to alertly enough at the time – because otherwise it could have been prevented... In fact, they believe, it could have happened to anyone. This is why Holocaust remembrances have increasingly taken on the character of dwelling on persecution and exclusion in general. Alain Finkielkraut says that the memory of the Holocaust has become increasingly entangled in an imaginary, abstract ideological world; the real Jews who were deported, tortured and murdered, those disappeared from view.¹⁾ Dutch journalist Ralf Bodelier summed it up as follows:

1) “Au nom de l'Autre: Réflexions sur l'antisémitisme qui vient” (In name of the Other; reflections on the upcoming antisemitism) by Alain Finkielkraut - Gallimard # 2003.

«« ‘Never again Auschwitz!’ - Those who uttered these words were not so much referring to the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp in Poland, but to the whole complex of exclusion, oppression and ultimately murder of a group of people. Moreover, those three words did not refer exclusively to Jews, but to any people who were oppressed and in a similar situation to the Jews under the Nazis. (...) Over the years public opinion tilted the interpretation of the terms oppressor and oppressed. Now it was no longer the Jews who were under the Nazis’ noose, but the Palestinians under Israel’s. (...) The memory of Auschwitz no longer contributes to a better understanding of Israel or the Jews. »» (www.ralfbodelier.com)

The persecution of Jews in World War II was unique in its large-scale and systematic approach. What was also unique was that it was pure racial enmity. For the first time, Jews were rounded up who did not feel Jewish at all and had no connection with mainstream Judaism. They were even rounded up if they were Christian by birth. Nevertheless, it followed a set pattern of catastrophes, for millennia, and in many tones. But unfortunately, people are hardly aware of it. Father Edward Flannery says: “*The vast majority of Christians, even wel educated, are all but totally ignorant of what happened to Jews in history and of the culpable involvement of the Church.*” ²⁾

This article focuses on the theological foundation that led to the persecution of the Jews in a terrible chain of events. The capstone was the publication of “The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion” at the end of the nineteenth century. Since then, there is little to report in terms of pure anti-Semitism, for then a mutation into racial hatred took place in the world and the theological argument shifted into the background. Where the God of the West had become a mere symbol, this was not unsurprisingly. Then, after the war, there was a new mutation to anti the State Israel. But it remains the same Jew-hatred. Would the waves of hatred have taken such serious forms had it not been preceded by centuries of theological underpinnings? No, because people don’t just want to hate, they want to hate ‘justified’.

The very term of anti-Semitism is in fact a denial that the Jews are a race, because the Semites represent a huge group of peoples. The Israelites, and hence the Jews, are descendants of patriarch Jacob later called Israel, and that race does not appear in the nations list of Genesis 10. After all, God created for himself a people of his own, separate from all nations. The Israelites are sometimes called Hebrews. The Hebrews do appear in the nations list. However, the term Hebrews does not primarily point to a blood relationship but to linguistic kinship, ancient Hebrew. Of course, the Israelites are descended from the Hebrews, but so are many.

Much water has already flowed to the sea on account of the the 100-page-long Protocols, allegedly formulated at the first Zionist Congress in Basel in 1897, convened for the promotion of Jewish settlement in Palestine. The Protocols are an interesting case of which no one knows the finer details. It would be the precipitation of the Jewish leadership’s plans to achieve, as a uniquely Jewish affair, a ruthless world dictatorship. That that dictatorship will take shape under the leadership of the Antichrist, pointed out in the Bible, need not be in doubt. This is foremost a Satanic plot known as “*the mystery of inequity*”. (2 Th. 2:7) Nonetheless, it is not about one people working for it, but it includes all of humanity. The execution of that plot was thwarted at the time of the Deluge and also during the construction of the Tower of Babel. At that time God did not allow it. Because of the universality of Satanism, which explains the power of the so-called Deep State and the unbroken continuity of the pursuit of power that far surpasses human organisational ingenuity – and being aware of how Satanists operate, who recruit their

2) Introduction to the “The Anguish of the Jews” by Edward H. Flannery - Paulist Press, USA # revised and updated 1999 (1st printing 1985).

followers from everywhere, also from the Jews who, it must be said, have a strong presence in it – it can be argued that the Protocols are beside the truth. Unfortunately, the truth is much worse than presented and in important respects also different.

If it is a Jewish plot why are the Jews the target of this hatred? Because the true Jews will be the people of God in the Reign of Peace, converted and all. And it is that Reign of Peace, God's Kingdom on earth, that must be averted at all costs, because then God would have prevailed. So the well-meaning deeply religious Jews must be persecuted and exterminated. The Satanists, who issued the Protocols, are not God's children, but as the Book Revelation 2:9-11 tells us: "*The blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan*". Richard Gilman: "*Rabbi Antelman expressed the view that when the Jewish Power Elite saw they would not be able to stop Zionism and the creation of the State of Israel, they decided they would 'join it', gain control of it, and destroy it from within.*" ³⁾ Antelman is right, because the richissime Rothschilds, those pur sang Satanists in keeping with the Judeo-Kabbalist recipe, were and are an extremely important factor in the globalisation drive, which is not to say that they are friends of the true Jews. The only Rothschild who was behind Zionism was Lord Nathan Rothschild (1840-1915), aka Natty, who not so incidentally was the grandson of the brother-in-law and business partner of Moses Montefiore (1784-1885). (Montefiori worked tirelessly during his lifetime to establish a Jewish homeland.) During the English mandate over Palestine, the Rothschilds, through the public media they controlled, always supported English government policies aimed at giving the mandate territory to the Arabs, who entered clandestinely in large numbers. But they allowed that to happen. The British foreign secretary, Ernest Bevin, in particular, played an extremely detrimental role in this during the pre-days of Israel's independence. Even the Hope Simpson Commission of 1930 put its finger on the sore spot (through Churchill's witness). Even then, Britain was misbehaving! The first High Commissioner for Palestine, an uncle of mine, was Lord Herbert Samuel, and he remained so until 1925. He was a Zionist friend and represented their interests rather than those of the British government, it was loudly lamented.

Elements in the Protocols are taken from "Dialogue aux Enfers entre Montesquieu et Machiavel" (Dialogue in Hell between Montesquieu and Machiavelli), written in 1864 by the French lawyer Maurice Joly, but it also contains elements from the guidelines of the high Freemason and Satanist Albert Pike, at the head of American Freemasonry since 1859. The intention of the Protocols seems to be, to place the blame for the perverse plan for world domination, with its ghastly details, entirely on Jewish shoulders, to serve as a powder keg for the persecution of Jews. A clever plot because it has largely succeeded in that. For Muslims it still counts as a justification for their hatred of the Jewish people and even here in the West that connection is still regularly made. Because the Protocols contain elements that are real, but also seem unreal, they provided a recipe for non-reli-

3) Quote by Richard Gilman, author of the Conspiracy Digest.

And there is proof of it too. It was on August 14 2012, at 9 PM, that the Israeli tv station, Channel Ten, exposed the ugliest secret of Israel's founders belonging to the Labour movement; the extremely high intensity X-ray treatment – which was therefore sickening – of nearly all Sephardi youths, which in shorter and longer term killed tens of thousands under terrible suffering. The irradiation was done under the pretext of healing (of an insignificant and not so prominent ailment). That was in the fifties. These Sefardi were among the deeply religious Jews who fled the Arab countries immediately after the war, where they had lived for many generations. They were completely destitute. And because they were religious, they were hated by secular Jews: better a dead Jew than a believing Jew. The expose began with the presentation of a documentary film called "The Ringworm Children". The people who somehow survived, became the country's perpetual poor and criminal class. It didn't make sense. Those who fled to France became prosperous and managed to become highly educated. The common explanation was that France got the rich, thus smart ones. The Moroccan lady is back on screen: "It was a Holocaust, a Sephardi Holocaust. And what I want to know is why no one stood up to stop it."

gious anti-Semitism, without discrediting the conspiracy itself. To sensible people, who are not used to this line of thinking, the apparent contradictions in the document render the plot itself implausible. However, for those who are versed in the coded secret language of Freemasonry, such as the high Freemason Doc Marquis, who later became a Christian, the document contains no contradictions but is a coded Illuminati blueprint for total world control.⁴⁾

2 – The mother cast out

Regarding anti-Semitism, much work has been done by the theologian Hans Jansen in the Dutch book: “Christian theology after Auschwitz”, which appeared in 1981 and caused a shock in the Christian community, although Jansen was certainly not the first to point to the church as the culprit. Jansen showed that over time, church and theology had created a breeding ground for Jew-hatred. With his book, he followed in the footsteps of “Faith and Fratricide” by Rosemary Ruether from 1974.⁵⁾ She is mentioned on 56 pages of his book. We must not forget Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a prominent German church leader who was murdered by the Nazis. He recognised the church’s complicity in the then erupting anti-Semitism. An essential factor at the root of ecclesial anti-Semitism is that early Christendom situated its identity by putting itself in the place of God’s chosen people. The New Testament church imagined itself to be the new Israel, at the time an understandable but erroneous position. Of this, Jansen says:

«« That is something unique in the history of religions, that a daughter snatches the name from her theological mother and then sends that mother naked into the desert. (...) The Church made the Jew a pariah. She knew exactly what the Jew was worth theologically: ‘nothing’. He only became something of worth again after becoming a Christian. It is telling that after the French Revolution baptism buys the entry ticket for participation in European society. Such a theologically biased anti-Judaism is quite evident in what church father Augustine formulated in his treatise “Adversus Judaeos” [against the Jews]: “*The doom of God is upon this people because they have not accepted the Messiah. This doom is also evidenced by the destruction of the Temple and of Jerusalem. As punishment for this rejection of the Messiah, Jews must henceforth live scattered and bear witness as servants and slaves of the Church to demonstrate the falsity of their own faith.*” »»⁶⁾

God would not only predestine unto salvation but also unto damnation, a heresy that Christian theologians have projected onto the supposed damnation of the people of Israel, who thus inevitably met their fate. “*Here the church has constructed a collective guilt*”, says Hans Jansen, “*and for centuries derived from it a legal basis to discriminate against the Jews, indeed to expel and partially exterminate them.*”⁷⁾ This principle was further developed in the doctrine of double predestination, where each one would be predestined beforehand, a doctrine central among several reformers, notably John

4) American Doc Marquis (1956-2018) published a book in 2004: “Memoirs of a Former Illuminati Witch”, which seems to have disappeared off the face of the earth. In his early childhood, he was employed by his parents in the terrible Satanic rituals.

5) When Ruether's book “Faith and Fratricide” came out, it was enthusiastically received by the Jewish community, but fell on deaf ears within Christian circles, which could not prevent it landing in the top ten best-selling religious books. She is now an acclaimed ecofeminist author (ecofeminist theology is an offshoot of the New Age movement) with works such as: “Gaia & God: An Ecofeminist Theology of Earth Healing” # 1994.

6) Interview in 1982 of dr. Hans Jansen, related to a recent tv-broadcast, by Aaltje van Valderen in the program brochure “Studio”, issued by the “Katholieke Radio Omroep”.

7) “Christelijke Theologie na Auschwitz” (Christian theology after Auschwitz) by Hans Jansen - Boekencentrum, The Hague # 1985 (Vol. 2, p. 762).

Calvin, a figure born as Jehan Cauin in Noyons, Picardy (a name derived from the Jewish Cohen). Several times in the New Testament and in a few verses of the Old Testament, we encounter something known as the Book of Life, which to the simpletons of mind seems to indicate the irrevocable damnation of the excluded. Revelation 20:15: *"Whoever did not appear in the Book of Life will be cast into the lake of fire."* (See also Ps. 69:27-28, Dan. 12:1, Luke 10:20, Ph. 4:3, Rev. 3:5) In a scandalous interpretation of Romans 8:29-30 and Ephesians 1:3-14 God's salvation would depend on a purely arbitrary prompting of his grace and be independent of others, sacrificing toil and prayer through which excluded people can still be converted to God, thanks to a particular divine grace. The above verses express that 'not all' are ordained to become, as 'first-borns', a heritage in Christ in conformity to his image and that God knows in advance who will belong to it - and that the remainder would be inescapably damned.

At least as important was the accusation of God-murder, which would have brought God's eternal wrath upon the Jews. This justified the actions of Christians as blood avengers, it was thought. A blasphemous posturing! The idea of God-murder was first formulated by St Justin Martyr in his "Dialogue with Trypho the Jew" and was adopted and elaborated on by St Chrysostom more than two hundred years later. Although never accepted by the Church as a doctrine, it formed the basis for countless crimes against the Jewish people. A feat of pseudo-theology, for, says the Apostle Paul, if the rulers had known of Christ's deity they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. (1 Cor. 2:8) Yet the terrible self-cursing of *"His blood come upon us and our children"* (Mt 27:25) will have had a terrible effect. Let's face it, it was not a blessing they brought upon themselves, especially since it is normal in the Hebrew language to place the same term within the spectrum of two extremes, in this case blessing or curse. To make matters worse, the following happened. After Jesus had risen from the dead, the temple guards were bribed by the high priests to deny the resurrection.⁸⁾ After this most disastrous act, which caused the downfall of the Jewish people and prevented them from benefiting from the time of grace granted to them, which spanned the time of the Book of Acts, a hatred evolved against the Jesus Christ and his followers, as exemplified in the Talmud. The Book of Truth says (Aug. 4 2012): *"My Death on the Cross wasn't enough for them. They wanted to ensure that no trace existed of Me, the Redeemer of the world afterwards, [and thus also the Redeemer of the Jewish people]. When they deliberately bribed liars to deny my Resurrection, the Pharisees denied [many] generations of Jews the right to the Truth."*

Not unrelated to the murder of God, though this time not as an indictment but as a stumbling block (1 Petr. 2:7-8), and as concerns the identity that the churches have appropriated over the centuries, is the common view that the Jewish people, based on their election, could only go in two directions: to love God or to hate God, and in both directions without any reservation and with the commitment of the genius and essence that is inherent in Judaism. From this chilling view, everything against God's people was legiti-

8) Mt. 28:12-15: "Meanwhile, the guards had scattered [to escape their punishment for having failed in the performance of their duties], but a few of them went into the city [the chief and two of his men] and told the high priests all what that had happened. They called a meeting of the religious leaders and came up with a plan; they took a large sum of money and gave it to the soldiers, bribing them to say: 'His disciples came in the night and stole the body while we [the three of us] were sleeping.' They assured them: 'If the Roman Governor (Pilatus) hears about your sleeping on duty, we will make sure you don't get blamed.' The soldiers took the bribe and did as they were told. That story, cooked up in the Jewish High Council, is still going around." According to visionary Anna Katarina Emmerick, there were five or six temple guards on duty who were regularly relieved; in addition, on Pilate's orders, the Roman officer Kassius, also known as Longinus, was continuously present. There must have been a considerable number of guards, perhaps sixteen (3x5 plus their chief), to be in a position to do a regular relieving of the guard. In that set-up, theft was out of the question.

mate. And so this people could not help but be like Cain, the eternal outcast and wanderer, branded, admittedly, with the sign that prevented their extermination. (Gen. 4:10-15) Here we see a theological theme, repeated over the centuries, that has spread like a cancer. Bruno Saglio expressed this in his foreword to “Les Juifs dans le Mystère de l’Histoire” (The Jews in the mystery of history), published in 1964 by the Argentinian Father Julio Meinvielle (1905-1973):

«« It is important to delve into this Mystery of the Greatness and Perfidy of the Jew. The Jew who does not follow Christ, is [inevitably] a ‘being of iniquity’; he is a ‘being of perfidy’ and can do nothing else in the course of History but persecute Christ. (...) That is his destiny. Because the *raison d’être* of this race, that is Christ [and to live for Him or against Him]. »»

Such views do not stand alone, but are to use the words of Alfred Fouillée ‘*idées-forces*’, that is, ideas with an emotional punch affecting the real world. Antityping reached a point where Jews were no longer flesh-and-blood people to feel compassion for. The same principle applies to caricatures: the extremely evil Fagin in “*Oliver Twist*” had to portray the stereotypical Jew. Only at the end of his life did Charles Dickens realise what he had done and made attempts to rid his novel of anti-Semitic slurs.

3 – *Anti-Semitism in the Bible?*

Anti-Semitism is mainly based on a theological foundation, i.e. an application of Biblical texts that have given ‘haters’ a stick to beat with. Our title uses Jew-hatred instead of the term anti-Semitism because the latter, especially in a historical context, is an imprecise term. You can speak of anti-Semitic Bible texts, which are texts exploited by Jew-haters. The texts themselves are not therefore anti-Semitic, a subtle but poorly understood distinction. Is an expression “The Jews are guilty of crucifying Christ, Son of God” anti-Semitic or not? Some will say: yes it is. I say: the question is misplaced, because you have to look at who is saying it and what is meant by it.

This article shows that it is a difficult issue. If the writings of Origen and Augustine are the cause of the persecution of Jews a thousand years later, does that also mean they are to blame? That is not easy to answer. You always have to look at the historical framework, the social conditions in which something takes place. People are all too ready to pass judgment by projecting from the present. We have to avoid that trap. But it is certainly true that later on, in motivating anti-Semitism, people went back to the Church’s paternal writings from the early days.

The Christian churches bear heavy blame for centuries of Jewish persecution. Its recognition of this has been a beneficial development within contemporary theology. But it has also led it to seek the ‘intellectual’ basis of Jew-hatred, which is based on Biblical texts, in the Bible itself. In the Dutch “Christian Theology after Auschwitz”, Hans Jansen reviews the fierce debate on this. The New Testament professor Willem K. Grossouw, on leaving Nijmegen University in 1977, spoke of a “*hellish paroxysm*” (paroxysm is the expression of deepest sorrow). Ruether went even further and applied the same approach to misogyny, speaking of the Jewish and Christian “*male monotheistic God*” as a destructive concept to oppress women. (Gaia & God, 1994) If it were not so serious, you might laugh. The gruesome term ‘evil germ cells’, denoting Biblical texts, fits entirely into this discussion, is in fact an appropriate term. Ad Krijger writes in an article on David Flusser (in “*Ter Herkenning*”, 1978-6) that it is understandable that “*after the horrors of the Second World War, the question arose in particular as to whether and to what extent the New Testament contains malignant germ cells, from which the cancerous growth of anti-Semitism could proliferate.*” I found the answer to this question in the duality within Judaism itself, which incidentally also exists in Christianity - after all, the devil does not confess colour.

4 – *The churches confess guilt*

The devious exegesis of the New Testament, which has been instrumental for many disasters in Jewish life, may only be countered by a new synthesis of the New and Old Testament (*adversus Marcionem et Tertullianum*), which is long overdue. In Brad Young's recent book "Paul the Jewish Theologian - a Pharisee among Christians, Jews, and Gentiles" (1997) it is postulated that the Church has unwittingly adopted an anti-Semitic attitude by rejecting the Judaism of the Apostle Paul, an attitude that echoes the teachings of the heretic Marcion, excommunicated in the year 144, as well as those of the early Church Father Tertullian. Marcion rejected the Old Testament and much that was Jewish in the New Testament, and made great use of Paul's writings to support his own ideas. Tertullian, on his turn, wrote in his polemic "*Adversus Marcionem*" that he did accept the Old Testament inasmuch as the inferiority of the Mosaic law (and according to Tertullian everyone agrees on that point) is not evidence of a cruel God (as Marcion professed), but rather of the inferiority of the Jewish people and their foolish stiffneckedness; which very last view was, not unjustly, also propagated by his contemporaries St Irenaeus and the St Justin Martyr.

Brad Young confides: "*Sometimes, as Christians, we have accepted Paul's teachings about Jesus while rejecting his love of the Hebrew Bible as well as his Judaic heritage.*"

⁹⁾ An unfortunate approach, for I may safely say that there is nothing in his teachings that does not fit with his authentic Judaism. This is corroborated by Abraham Heschel's remark, who was a professor of Jewish mysticism at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America and authored a number of widely read books on Jewish philosophy:

«« The Christian message, which in its origins intended to be an affirmation and culmination of Judaism, became very early diverted into a repudiation and negation of Judaism; obsolescence and abrogation of Jewish faith became conviction and doctrine; the new covenant was conceived not as a new phase or disclosure but as abolition and replacement of the ancient one; theological thinking fashioned its terms in a spirit of antithesis to Judaism. Contrast and contradiction rather than acknowledgement of roots relatedness and indebtedness, became the perspective. »» ¹⁰⁾

Fortunately initiatives were being deployed to turn the tide. John Paul II, on becoming pope in 1978, soon made statements that revealed a new and positive attitude within the Church. He repeatedly stressed that God's covenant with Israel had never been rescinded and is still valid today. This meant a complete reversal of the traditional teaching that the Jewish rejection of Jesus implied that once and for all God had rejected the 'chosen people' and that now the Christian Church had become the new Israel. This pope has often expressed a sincere desire to improve relations with the Jewish people and he has deployed important initiatives to that effect. And thus in 1997 a public announcement was made that guilt would be admitted regarding anti-Semitism within the Roman Church in the past, which indeed happened in the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000.

A first step in that direction was the organising of a general Christian and private symposium, under the auspices of the Vatican, around the theme of "The Roots of the Anti-Jewish Attitude in the Christian World". Jewish experts were not invited because the main topic was anti-Semitism within Christian theology, which also included the Protestant ways. The Dominican Georges Cottier, one of the organizers, explained that the Holocaust and the destruction camps were not on the agenda because "*the racist folly of*

9) "Paul the Jewish Theologian" by Brad H. Young – Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, U.S.A. # 1997 (pp. 65-66).

10) "The Insecurity of Freedom – essays on human existence" by Abraham Joshua Heschel – Schocken, New York # 1972 (first printing 1963) (p. 169).

national-socialism” was essentially paganism.¹¹⁾ The document “We Remember” that resulted from this symposium was widely criticized by Jewish organizations for failing, so they said, in confronting the Church’s failures both during the Holocaust itself and in creating the cultural climate in Europe in which it occurred. This reaction from them is understandable, but it is not correct to equate both: the supposed failure during the debacle itself and the age-long cultural development that preceded it. The document “Memory and Reconciliation”, released in the year 2000, went a little further, but in their view still failed to admit the Church’s corporate responsibility for any complicity in the Holocaust. “Memory and Reconciliation” lays the blame on flawed humans, although it uses the term ‘generations’ to imply this was not simply an occasional lapse. A significant step was set during the Mass celebrated for the occasion, when the Australian Cardinal Edward Cassidy asked God forgiveness for sins against the Jews, praying: *“Christians will acknowledge the sins committed by not a few of their number against the people of the Covenant.”* - whereupon the Pope movingly answered: *“God of our fathers, You have chosen Abraham and his descendants to bring Your name to the nations: we are deeply saddened by the behaviour of those who in the course of history have caused these children of Yours to suffer, and asking Your forgiveness we wish to commit ourselves to genuine brotherhood with the people of the Book.”* prayer he pushed in between the stones of the Wailing Wall when, a few days later, he made his historic tour in Israel.

The rules in the Early Church

In the early church, it was decided at the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15) that Christians from the gentiles do not have to abide by the rules of Judaism, except with regard to eating what is tainted by idols, fornication, what is strangled, and consuming blood. These commandments are interesting because they point to idolatrous rites, and in no way imply that for Christians the Old Testament dietary rules can be disregarded, nor the hygienic precepts. It should have been regarded as a helping hand to paganism. The initial stages of idolatry are fairly innocuous, but it escalates before someone fully realises what is going on. Satanic rituals are often accompanied by banquets and sexual excesses. And the drinking of human blood is also a part of it, as does a provoked near-death experience as well as an orgasm through strangulation, as witness the following in which the perpetrators and the victim were Satanists: «« “Arrest Made in Satanic Killing of 13-Year-Old Girl” by Todd Venezia - APBNews.com, Santa Monica, California # July 23, 1999: “A fugitive who allegedly helped strangle a 13-year-old girl in a 1998 satanic ritual has been found hiding out in Alabama, police said.” »» (from “The Ross Institute - Internet Archives for the Study and Controversial Groups”).

The four commandments of the Jerusalem Council are found in Lev. 17 and 18. It can hardly be a ‘coincidence’ that precisely these commandments, which are at the heart of the Torah (the 5 books of Moses), were the deciding factor in this Council decision? The laws for the sanctification of life are listed in ch. 17 to 20. They form the centrepiece of all observances of the entire Torah and were given to the people of Israel at a time when pagan practices and idolatry were rampant among them. Abstaining from ingrained pagan customs is the beginning of a walk of life that is pleasing to God, i.e. the beginning of a truly Christian disposition.

John Paul II has gone a lot further than any in history towards acknowledging corporate responsibility on the part of the Church. His courageous, splendid and inspiring initiatives - that were fully of his own making - were pushing against significant opposition

11) Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn was of the opinion in “The Gulag Archipelago (1918-1956)” that Nazism, just like Marxism, exceeds the human capacity and is demoniacal, hence paganism in its worst form.

within the Church but, fortunately, were welcomed by the Jewish community who understood the historical implications. During the Great Jubilee the Pope made a visit to Israel's Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial, where he honored the millions of Jews killed during the Holocaust. He said:

«« Here, as at Auschwitz and many other places in Europe, we are overwhelmed by the echo of the heart-rending laments of so many. Men, women and children cry out to us from the depths of the horrors they have gone through. How can we fail to heed their cries? No one can forget nor ignore what has happened. No one can diminish its scale. »»

Israel's prime minister Ehud Barak, whose grandparents were killed in the Treblinka extermination camp, addressed the Pope with these words: *"Here, right now, time itself has come to a stand-still. This very moment holds within it 2000 years of history, and their weight is almost too much to bear."*

5 – Two nations shall be separated

A complex of factors underpinned the horrors of the Holocaust. One of these factors was misdirected theology, and it is for this reason that a critical examination of Christian anti-Semitism is important, but not without taking a look at the essential nature of anti-Semitism itself, which is pagan in nature and stems from the father of lies, the devil himself, who knows how to infiltrate everywhere. He seeks to use good to create evil.

There is a tendency to seek out not only error-oriented theology, but also to consider the New Testament itself anti-Semitic and to turn away from it. There are quite a few Biblical texts that critics believe may give rise to this reprehensibility, such as: *"The father from whom ye (Pharisees) are is the devil"*.¹²⁾ But if we are to cleanse the New Testament of 'evil germs', even the Old Testament does not escape from it. Take for instance Psalm 69: *"Do crime to their crime, and let them not come to Thy righteousness. Let them be blotted out from the Book of Life, and not be inscribed with the righteous."* The pre-exilic Prophet Jeremiah, in particular, is taken to task. He addresses the Jewish people of Israel as degenerate tendrils, for whom prayers should not be offered.¹³⁾ In his day, idolatry was so bad that there were even pagan altars and idols within the walls of the Temple itself. Not that idols interested them - it was the sexual excesses that counted. Finally, the measure was full and chastisement came...

So yes, God chastises his people. But that discipline comes from a God who loves his people so much that He is jealous when they turn their backs on Him. His love and compassion come first, and the chastisement is always a call to Israel to return to Him. People often speak of anti-Semitism when there is none at all. The above example attests to this. Whenever critical or accusatory remarks are made about Jews (in the Bible or anywhere else), it is important to look carefully at who is making the criticism, what the context of the statement is and what exactly is meant by it.

After a long siege, Nebuchadnezzar conquers Jerusalem, the last vestige, which is razed to the ground. The population, consisting mainly of Judahites, is carried off into the Babylonian exile. Only seventy years later, in 489 BC, those Judahites return, and from then on they are called Jews. That time also marks the end of the supremacy of Mosaic and Biblical thinking and marks the beginning of modern Judaism or Talmudism, which is a mixture of Pharisaic and Mosaic thought. Pharisaism at the beginning of our era was strongly tinged by Babylonian paganism. We find this reflected in the Talmud. Modern

12) John 8:44. See also Mt. 23:14-33; John 10:26; 1 Thes. 2:14-15 and Rev. 2:9; 3:9.

13) Jer. 2:21-22 and 7:16. See also 6:15; 8:12; 11:14; 14:11-12; 24:9-10.

Judaism is unadulterated Talmudism. The gigantic Sea of Talmud consists of 63 books with a host of precepts, rulings and advice. It exalts itself above the Holy Scriptures.¹⁴⁾ Says Jeremiah Ch. 2: *"They have turned their back on Me, the fountain of living waters, and hewn themselves broken cisterns."*

One of the consequences of Talmudism was that in the course of time, the expectation of a real Messiah increasingly faded into the background and was replaced by a synthetic messianism to be fought out of purely human strength. After all, the Messiah himself, as they had imagined him, had failed to appear at the expected time, and so people looked for alternatives. It is therefore no coincidence that Karl Marx, the inventor of messianic Communism, was a Jew. (Although Catholic by birth, his paternal and maternal grand-fathers were rabbis).

The structure of the Talmud is reminiscent of Jesus' statement that the good man draws the good from his heart and the bad man draws the bad. Le Chevalier Drach who, before becoming a Catholic, was nominated to become chief rabbi of Paris, described this duality as follows:¹⁵⁾

«« On the one hand, there is the false Kabbalah, full of ridiculous superstitions and also concerned with black magic, theurgy (magic through demonic intervention), and goétie (from the Greek 'goeteia' that points at 'roaring' spirits). In a word, as it has become in the hands of the teachers of the unfaithful Synagogue, which has divorced itself from its own principles. On the other hand, there is the true and unmixed Kabbalah [in the proper sense: divine science, divine philosophy, speculative theology] which was taught in the ancient Synagogue and whose character is frankly Christian. (...) In fact, many rabbis (...) were converted to Christianity simply by reading the Kabbalah. »»

Before God's people arrive at their destiny, a catharsis (purification) will first be needed to wash out what is evil. A catharsis can never be decided for anyone else; let Christendom focus on its own catharsis, that of misdirected theology, which has produced so much bitter fruit. When the time is right, the talmudic Jew will do his own catharsis. All have erred; God's eye seeks but finds none righteous, not one! Be it individuals, institutions or nations.

Some knowledge of the Jewish adulteration is good (that is, of the pagan influences within Judaism). This phenomenon is in Judaism under the sign of Esau, the lamenting son who missed out on the patriarchal blessing, which instead went to his twin brother Jacob, later called Israel. During Rebekah's pregnancy, God announces: *"Two nations are in your womb, and those two nations shall separate. One nation shall be stronger than the other, and the elder (Esau) shall serve the younger (Jacob)."* (Gen 25:23) A curious prophecy. What nations? Already during their lifetimes, the brothers say goodbye to each other. Esau seems to be gone forever. So where is the problem? He was seeking revenge and the anti-power came up with a plan throughout the generations. As a foolproof way of appropriating the blessing, his seed managed in crescendo to intermingle with Israel. Now we understand Revelation 2:9: *"I know of the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan."* We see that his descendants repeatedly stirred up the other nations to hatred against Israel. They often hide – as Jacob hid in a lamb's skin to snatch Esau's blessing – and let others do the dirty work. Is it strange that Malachi says (1:4): *"Esau, the people with whom the Lord is angry forever"*. The com-

14) Babha Metsia fol. 33a; Sopherim XV, 7, fol. 13b; Sanhedrin X, 3, f. 88b; Mizbeach V (taken from the writings of Le Chevalier Drach).

15) *De l'harmonie entre l'Église et la Synagogue* (About the conformity between the Church and the Synagogue), by Le Chevalier P. L. B. Drach # 1844 (Vol. 2 pp. XIX and XVI, Vol. 1 p. XI).

mentary on Deuteronomy 25:17-19, used in synagogues, reads *“that it is commonly assumed that Amalek, grandson of Esau, went around among the various nations to stir them up against Israel”*. And also: *“The destruction of Amalek will not be made a duty until Israel will have rest from all its enemies.”*¹⁶⁾ The verses from Deuteronomy are in response to what Amalek had done to the Israelites at Refidim (Jasher 81:52-61, Lev. 17:8-15), when the people were exhausted with fatigue and they cut down all the weak who had stayed behind. In Deuteronomy it says: *“So then, when the Lord your God has given you the land and made you safe from all your enemies who live around you, be sure to kill all the Amalekites, so that no one will remember them any longer. Do not forget!”* Pulling out the Esau weed now is a hopeless task because its roots are entangled with those of the good grain. This fits 4 Ezra 6:9: *“Esau is the end of this age. Jacob the start of the age to come”*, which is an allusion to Genesis 25:26: *“After Esau was born his brother came out, and his hand took hold of Esau’s heel.”*

Jacob, the heel-grabber, represents a different principle than Esau, the aggressor, who does not look beyond the tangible. For him, the law of the strongest applies. Jacob, however, represents the man who knows his soul and has an eye for the spiritual dimension of his existence. Who therefore has an eye for God’s laws and spares the weak. From that principle comes redemption while that other principle is doomed to perish. Rasji (1040-1105), regarded as one of the most important interpreters of the Old Testament and the Talmud, speaks of Jacob as a ‘tsaddik’ (righteous one) and of Esau as a ‘rasja’ (evil one). Through trickery and deceit, Jacob obtains the firstborn right that would belong to Esau, but it is not an iron law. That right (primogeniture) traditionally depended on the aptitude of the candidate. Esau was not predestined by God, but his father had no ears for that - what delicious hunting dishes he always brought! If we may speak of guilt, it was after all deceit, then the father is more at fault than the son, an aspect usually overlooked. Jacob’s deceit by no means constitutes the essence of his person – he did it reluctantly and fearing the consequences – but it was prompted by circumstances. Being righteous, he acted in the spirit of God’s command and on his mother’s urgent advice: *“Go ahead boy, the curse (for your deception) I will take it upon myself.”* (Gen. 27:13) And that it was the right thing to do, this the Apostle Paul confirms: *“For when they were not yet born, nor had done anything good or bad – that God’s purpose in election might stand, not by works, but of Him who calls – then it was assured: ‘The elder (Esau) will serve the younger (Jacob)’.* Just as it is written: *Jacob I loved, but Esau I disliked.”* (Rom 9:11-13) Augustine noted the contrast between the two and identified Jacob with the Church and Esau with Judaism, ...a nasty piece of replacement theory, in which he will have joined the communis opinio, because all of us are children of our time.¹⁷⁾

6 – The Talmud not a priori innocent

Although the Prophet Isaiah lived well before the Babylonian exile, we find in his 29th chapter exactly what we need to see where Israel has failed. It predicts that Israel would be smitten with blindness (cf. Ps 69:24), which Paul uses in Romans 11, but it also predicts a moment of its removal. And continues the apostle: *“If their transgression has enriched the world and their failure means abundance for the Gentiles, what should we not expect, when they make up their deficiency!”* Why were the Jews struck with blind-

16) “De Vijf Rollen en de Haphtharoth en Shabbath-gebeden” (The Five Scrolls and the Haphtharoth & Shabbath prayers), by J. Vredenburg, teacher at the Beth-Hamidrash School in Amsterdam - Joachimstal, Amsterdam # ± 1900 (p. 94). Also: Num. 14:43-45; Judg. 3:13, 6:3, 33, 7:12; 2 Chron. 20:10, 22-23; Ps. 83:6-9. See also from Flavius Josephus’ Jewish Antiquities III (2:1): “Amalekites from Gobolitis and Petra set all the desert tribes against Israel.”

17) See Appendix: “Esau, the firstborn, namely, her Son Jesus Christ”.

ness? Says the Lord: *“Inasmuch as these people draw near with their mouths and honor Me with their lips, but have removed their hearts far from Me. Woe to those who want to hide their plans from God deeply and do everything in darkness. (...) One turns things upside down.”* (Is. 29:13-16)

Apostasy within Judaism reached its zenith with the Sabbatjans, the followers of the 17th-century Jewish ‘messiah’ Sabbatai Tzvi, also called the king of demons. They preached the existence of a higher Torah (the first books of the Bible), which excels in highest perversity, a Satanic brew. This is known as the Torah of Atzilot (emanations), which embraces a complete reversal of the 36 keritoto, or prohibitions, being changed into positive commands. This included sexual abominations, such as incest. This movement, called the Dönme (the turncoats) in Turkey, is still prominent, albeit in deepest secrecy.¹⁸⁾ Should that be surprising? There are estimates, which I find credible, that 20% of members of the US Congress are Satanists, Jewish or otherwise. The orthodox Rabbi Marvin Antelman finishes his book with the story:¹⁹⁾

«« My late father, Harry Antelman (1899-1992) was the first to tell me that, from his life experience of living through the Soviet Revolution in Bessarabia and witnessing first hand how (the Jewish) Trotsky slaughtered Jews with impunity, that he knew the psyche of these self-identity-hating Jews, and that I should be aware that deep down in their hearts, this type of person would like to see my father and me dead, and to be cognizant of this phenomena. And so this books ends upon the theme it began: ‘To Eliminate the Opiate’ (also the title of his book). »»

Sabbatarians read the Bible using the ATBaSH system, where each letter is interchanged with its counterpart: the first letter with the last, the second with the second-to-last, etc. Moshe (Moses) thus becomes Tzvi. This practice is severely condemned in the Bible, to be witnessed by Jeremiah 25:17-18, 26 and 51:40-41, where ‘Sesak’ is the ATBaSH variant of Babel:

«« Then I took the cup from the Lord’s hand, and made all the nations drink, to whom the Lord had sent me: Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, its kings and its princes to make them a desolation, an astonishment, a hissing, and a curse. (...) Also the king of **Sheshach** shall drink after them. (...) I will bring them down like lambs to the slaughter, like rams with male goats. Oh, how **Sheshach** is taken! Oh, how the praise of the whole earth is seized! »»

Antelmann writes that the genius Jonathan Eibeschutz (1690-1764), the then leader of the Sabbathian movement, perverted with his writing “V’Avo Ha Yom El HaAyin”, title taken from Genesis 24:42: *“I will come to the eye [Rebekah’s well] today”*. As a result, entire communities in Moravia and Poland lapsed into a state of sexual anarchy.²⁰⁾ Clearly, anyone who indulges in this Satanic concoction of the ATBaSH system removes

18) The Dönme are required to observe the laws of Islam in public, though by their own rules they are strictly forbidden to intermarry with true Muslims. Also, every Dönme has both a Hebrew and a Turkish name, the latter only for his activities within the Islamic community.

19) “To eliminate the Opiate – Vol. 2” by Marvin S. Antelman – The Zionist Book Club, Jerusalem # 2002. Volume 1 was published in 1974 by Zahavia. That the Sabbatjans are still prominent is convincingly demonstrated by Antelman. The noted Daniel Pipes says of this: “He draws a direct line from the Illuminati to the Communists and concludes that the same radical clique that gave the world Socialism and Communism wants to see the Jewish religion and its people destroyed” (“Conspiracy” - Free Press # 1977)

20) ibid pp. 88-89. See also “B’chor Satan” (Satan, the firstborn) by Marvin S. Antelman - Yaron Golan, Tel Aviv # 1991.

himself from God's protective hand and makes himself a defenceless victim of the devil-inspired hatred of Jews.

But one need not be a Sabbatarian to come to apostasy. The original Talmud contained many blasphemies against our Lord and Saviour and his blessed Mother, and there were quite a few texts preaching hatred of Christians. Mind you, these texts come from the centuries after the Jewish Bar Kochba revolt (132-135AD). Romans made terrible inroads in that war, and the land was then mockingly called Palestine (a derivation of Philistines). To get an impression of the much milder and closer relationship between Jews and Christians in the period just before the redaction of the first Talmud tracts, we can turn to Justin the Martyr's "Dialogue with Trypho the Jew", a polemic intercourse, written down between 155 and 161 AD. Based on Biblical arguments, Justin tries to convince Trypho of becoming a Christian, and though unsuccessful they depart as friends. From 1578 onwards, for fear of reprisals, most Talmud editions were cleansed, although traces of hatred

Who is Michael Rodkinson? (1845-1904)

His first name was Frumkin (pious family). Michael ha-Levi Frumkin descended from a family of the Chabad Chasidim movement, or Lubavitch Chasidim. The name Chabad is an acronym for chochmah, binah, da'at (חכמה, בינה, דעת): wisdom, understanding and knowledge. The Chasidim are a branch of Orthodox Judaism that promotes spirituality and joy as the essence of faith. (Chasid is a word derived from piety.) When Frumkin went over to the camp of the modern Jewish scholars, he renamed himself Rodkinssohn and became editor of the Königsberg Hebrew WdJ weekly journal Ha-kol and other Hebrew-language periodicals. (Wissenschaft des Judentums [WdJ] or Science of Judaism was a German Enlightenment movement of the 19th century.) Among Rodkinssohn's various activities then, was the publication of "Toledot ba'alei shem tov" (A History of Chasidic Rebbes # 1876). Its very name points to the conceptual transformation that he had made: from a typical Chasidic account of praise (praise of the Rebbe) to critical historical writing (history of the Rebbe). [Source: "The Dawn of Hasidic - Haredi Historiography" by Nahum Karlinsky - Modern Judaism # 2007-27, pp. 20-46] He later went to the United States. Did this coincide with his conversion to Christianity? He published HaChozeh (the prophet) and HaMedaber (the speaker), periodicals that aimed to convert Jews to Christianity.

can still be found in current editions; for instance through the appellations for Jesus, often Yeshu, an acronym for "*that his name and memory may be blotted out*", and Ben Pandera: "*son of Panther*", the name of a Roman soldier pulled out of the sky, as well as Ben Stada, derived from 'Stath da': "*she has gone aside from her husband*", as well as Balaam and others. To this end, see the indispensable "Christianity in Talmud and Midrash" by R. Travers Herford from 1903, with many new editions, most recently from the Jewish KTAV Publishing House.²¹⁾ Herford was a minister from Manchester who radically rejected Trinitarianism. As a result, he had a strong affinity with Judaism. For his part, Justinas Pranaitis, a Roman Catholic priest from Tsarist Russia, made an erudite study of Jewish defamation through the original Talmud editions, which took shape in his "Christianus in Talmude Iudaeorum", which was published in St Petersburg in 1892, but in Latin it could only be read by few - and no doubt that was the intention.²²⁾ In 1939, this work was translated into English by a defrocked priest Leo H. Lehmann as "The Talmud Unmasked". A similar work appeared in 1888 from the hand of the priests Auguste Rohling and Maximilien de Lamarque, called "Le Juif Talmudiste" (totally reviewed and corrected) - Action et Civilisation, Bruxelles (a German one appeared the previous

year). Possibly, Rolhling was assisted by Rodkinson in his translations and quotations from Jewish literature, as his knowledge of Talmudic language was inadequate.

Of the Talmud appeared in the period of 1896 to 1918 an English translation from the hand of Michael Ha-Levi Rodkinson, a converted Chasid Jew, which translation was fiercely criticized by Jewish communities. This one did confirm Pranaitis' earlier conclusions. Rabbi Marvin Antelman writes:

«« Until the first comprehensive English translation of the Talmud by Soncino Press appeared (1935-1952); a non-comprehensive translation by M. L. Rodkinson was the only one in existence. Most scholars utilizing his works were unaware that he was a sinister personality whose primary efforts to render portions of the Tamud into English was for the purpose of 'disinformation' and for providing grist for anti-Semitic attacks on Jewry via careful distortion of selected words and (intentional) mis-translation of talmudic passages, and facilitating their use out of context. Unfortunately, however, Jew haters have even managed to distort excerpts from the superior comprehensive English Soncino Talmud for their nefarious purposes. »» (To Eliminate the Opiate, Vol. 2, p. 131)

Antelman, for whom I have great respect, does not accuse Rodkinson of insufficient professional knowledge, but of malicious intent. Because he offers no linguistic analysis to bolster his thesis, notably of highly controversial passages, he comes across as unconvincing in this regard. That Rodkinson alias Frumkin had an abhorrence of the ways of his former peers and sometimes went too far in expressing it, does not prove that his translation is flawed. It should be emphasised that educated Talmudic Jews converting to Christianity can face enormous resistance from organised Jewry. It has always been that way, and it still is.

Drawing on Rodkinson's edition, Elizabeth Dilling, supported in it by the notorious anti-Semite Henry Ford (founder of the Ford factories), has excerpted the monstrosities therein, which covers all sorts of things, including non-Christian ones.²³⁾ In the last chapter of her book, Dilling sets out to show that the Jews are not even a race!²⁴⁾ Anti-Semitism has reached new heights here. Nevertheless, based on Rodkinson's translation, she gives a faithful account of many offensive passages in the Talmud. A remarkable and quite different picture emerges in George Moore's standard work, from 1927, in which he draws on primary Talmudic sources to sketch the character of Judaism in the early years of Christianity, a work from which I like to draw.²⁵⁾ It ultimately boils down to this: "What do we focus on?" because, as with a person's heart, the Talmud contains good and evil things.

21) "Christianity in Talmud and Midrash" by Robert Travers Herford brings together every single possible rabbinic reference to Jesus Christ and to his followers. The quantity of material added together, occupies about 35 pages. It is accompanied by extensive commentaries by Herford, which is essential because of the veiled language normally used. One can learn nothing about the historical Jesus from these accounts, but one can learn from them quite a lot about the rabbinic attitudes towards Jesus Christ and his beloved mother, the Holy Virgin Mary, who is to be praised by all generations. (Luke 1:48) I quote from the KTAV edition from 2007 (p. xxiv): "Even if Christianity was not a fundamental worry of emerging Rabbinic Judaism, basic Jewish objection to this religion, which hundreds of years later would blossom into a full-scale Jewish polemic attack on Christianity, are already present in embryonic form in Rabbinic literature."

22) Pranaitis served as a prosecution witness in the prosecution of Menahim Beilis, charged with the ritual killing of Andrei, a boy of twelve from Kiev. He was found with punctures in his veins that had bled him to death. The process attracted much international attention, and actually there was no proof against Beilis, who was acquitted in 1913.

In his translation of the Talmud under “History of the Talmud” (Vol. 10, Ch. 10), Rodkinson quotes J. Alexander from “The Jews, their Past, Present and Future”, from 1870:

«« The Talmud, as it now stands, is almost the whole literature of the Jews during a thousand years. Commentator followed upon commentator, till at last the whole became an immense bulk; the original Babylonian Talmud alone consists of 2,947 folio pages. Out of such literature it is easy to make quotations which may throw an odium over the whole. But fancy, if the production of a thousand years of English literature, say, from the “History” of the Venerable Bede to Milton’s “Paradise Lost” were thrown together into a number of uniform folios and judged in like manner – if because some superstitious monks wrote silly “Lives of Saints”, therefore the works of John Bunyan should also be considered worthless. The absurdity is too obvious to require another word from me. Such, however, is the continual treatment the Talmud receives both at the hand of its friends and of its enemies. Both will find it easy to quote in behalf of their preconceived notions, but the earnest student will rather try to weigh the matter impartially, retain the good he can find even in the Talmud, and reject what will not stand the test of God’s Word. »»

In Vol. 10 (Ch. 9) Rodkinson quotes Isaak Markus Jostin from “Geschichte des Judenthums und Seiner Secten” (History of Judaism and its Sects), a book still in print:

«« The Talmud is a great mine, in which are imbedded all varieties of metals and ores. Here may be found all kinds of valuables, the finest gold and rarest gems, as also the merest dross. Much has been unearthed that has realized countless profit to the world. The great spiritual work whose outcome has been apparent in the advancement of religion has shown that the Talmud is not only of incalculable value in the pursuit of wisdom, but that it has a self-evident significance for all times, which cannot be shown by any mere extracts from its pages, and that it can not be disregarded on the plea of its antiquity as valueless in the knowledge of the (true) Jewish religion. Indeed it is and must remain the chief source of this knowledge, and particularly of the historical development of the Jewish religion. More than this, it is the abode of that spirit which has inspired that religion - these many centuries - that spirit from which even those who sought to counteract it could not escape. It is and will remain a labyrinth with deep shafts and openings, in which isolated spirits toil with

23) “The Plot Against Christianity” by Elizabeth Dilling - The Elizabeth Dilling Foundation, Nebraska # 1964. A better-structured edition appeared in 1983 under the title “The Jewish Religion: Its Influence Today”.

24) The thesis that Russian or Ashkenazi Jews have no Jewish blood and are therefore not a race was popularised by the noted author Arthur Koestler (1905-1983) in imitation of Elijah ben Elijah Kazaz (1832-1912), who, out of a kind of self-hatred, deposed his coreligionists. Although plausible that the Khazar upper class converted to Judaism in the first half of the eighth century, it is absurd to think that such a thing was possible for the entire population and without a locally significant Jewish community. That the entire Khazar population would have converted en masse to Judaism is a carefully perpetuated myth. That is impossible, a fabrication, because the Jewish religious experience is too comprehensive; becoming a Christian, becoming a Muslim, yes that is fairly easy, but becoming a Jew requires years of intensive preparation and requires great intelligence. Solzhenitsyn manages to discuss this issue adequately in the first chapter of his brilliant book “Two Hundred Years Together”, even better than the Jewish Encyclopaedias. Repeated genetic research by Dr Karl Skorecki and others has conclusively shown that the DNA markers of the Ashkenazim are similar to those of Spanish Sephardic Jews and show no kinship with the Turkish-Asiatic gene pool.

25) “Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era – The Age of the Tannaim” by George Foot Moore - Harvard University Press # 1927.

tireless activity, a labyrinth which offers rich rewards to those who enter impelled by the desire to gain, not without hidden dangers to those who venture wantonly into its mazes and absorb its deadly vapors. »» (Londen # 1870, Vol. 2, p. 202)

7 – *From religio licita to outcast*

Already Roman Cicero of the first century BC, and Tacitus a century later, made disparaging remarks about the Jewish people, but so did others. At the time, this was not theologically, but politically motivated, so that order was maintained in the empire. Besides, the Jewish cult at that time was 'religio licita' (permissible). God-deniers of the Age of Enlightenment, such as Voltaire, did exploit these writers to vent their anti-Semitism, sometimes quoting them verbatim.²⁶⁾ The Finnish author Maijastina Kahlos writes:

«« The Jews to some extent enjoyed an exceptional status in Rome from Julius Caesar [first century BC] onwards. Caesar excused Jews [and only Jews] in Rome from his general prohibition on private religious associations, permitting them to gather together “according to the customs of their ancestors”. (...) The announcements of privileged status and the support of the Roman government were welcome because of considerable anti-Jewish sentiments in Greek cities in the East. (...) It is worth remembering that, although the Roman elite did not like Judaism, it did not cherish any other alien religions either. Many of those Roman writers who showed their hostility or contempt for the Jews and their religion rebuked other peoples and their religions as well. »»²⁷⁾

In the early literature, the anti-Semitic tendency was relatively benign. As Bruce Metzger observes: “*The epistle of the Apostolic Father Barnabas, written shortly before or after 130 AD, takes, throughout its interpretation of the Old Testament, a radically anti-Jewish attitude that was unique in primitive Christian literature.*”²⁸⁾ Anti-Judaist theology gained momentum only after the separation between Judaism and Christianity had become complete. Encouraged by imperial decrees, Christianity increasingly became the favoured state partner while Judaism was increasingly curtailed. Its evolution can be followed step by step in the “Codex Theodosianus” dating from the year 438.

Augustine of Hippo (354-430) gave the go-ahead. Says Hans Jansen: “*God’s rejection of the Jews is reflected in the pariah stature of the life of the Jews in the Diaspora, with the Latin Church father noting that ‘the humiliation of the Jews in the Diaspora should contrast with the beauty of the stature of the Church’.*”²⁹⁾ Similar language, but more vicious, is found among his contemporaries St Cyillus of Jerusalem, St Ephraim and St Epiphanes. The latter called the Herodians “*the real Jews, because they are lazy and disloyal*”. And St Gregory of Nyssa added to this with terms like “*devil’s advocates*” and “*vipers’ spawn*”. Another contemporary, St Chrysostomus, an orator of stature and fluent writer, manages to back up an endless series of indictments with elaborate theological treatises, and the latter explains why his influence reached beyond his immediate audience.

26) “The French Enlightenment and the Jews” by Arthur Hertzberg - Columbia University, New York #1968 (p. 313). Referred to in: “The Anguish of the Jews” by Edward H. Flannery - Paulist Press, USA # revised and made up to date in 1999 (p.27).

27) “Forbearance and Compulsion – the rhetoric of religious tolerance and intolerance in late Antiquity” by Maijastina Kahlos - Duckworth, Londen # 2009 (pp. 14-5).

28) “The Canon of the New Testament” by Bruce M. Metzger - Oxford University Press, USA # 1987 (p. 56).

29) “Christelijke Theologie na Auschwitz” (Christian theology after Auschwitz) by Dr. Hans Jansen - Boekencentrum, The Hague # 1985 (Vol. 1, p. 101).

During this Church period, popular anger focused almost exclusively on the destruction of synagogues. Attempts by secular authorities to prevent this were to no avail. It should be stressed that 'Christian' violence then also took place against pagan religions, and the persecution of Christian heretics was much more intense than of Jews. Incidentally, Christians were often converts from the pagans, who sometimes brought their own baggage of anti-Judaic sentiments with them. The situation was not straightforward, as many converts from paganism already had a familiarity with and sympathy for Judaism, and they saw no contradiction in the Jewish way of doing things in relation to their newly acquired faith.

Rodkinson's translation is unique in its kind

Michael Rodkinson discusses in Ch. VII Vol. 10: "History of the Talmud", the different translations of the Talmud, and then remarks:

«« To translate the Mishna is a comparatively easy task. [For instance Joseph Barclay published under the title "The Talmud" a translation of 18 treatises of the Mishna with annotations, which was published in London in 1878.] The Mishna's generally plain and uniform language and style of expression, and its compendious character could easily enough be rendered into another language, especially when accompanied by some explanatory notes. But it is quite different with the Gemara, especially the Babylonian. There are, of course, also passages in the Gemara which offer no great difficulties to a translator who is sufficiently familiar with the idiom in which the original is composed. We refer to the historical, legendary and homiletical portions (Hagadas), which the compilers have interspersed in every treatise. The main part of the Gemara, however, which is essentially of an argumentative character, giving minute reports of discussions and debates on the law, this part, so rich in dialectical subtleties, and so full of technicalities and elliptical expressions, offers to the translator almost insurmountable difficulties. »»

8 – Like hunted game

The first centuries show a complex picture of the relationship between the Christian communities and Judaism. We should not automatically hold the church then indebted to the later anti-Semitic outbursts. It is true, however, that in the beginning the chaff was sown for the anti-Semitism afterwards. Throughout the Middle Ages, there is little to report on anti-Semitism in Christian theological and practical terms.

That throughout the Middle Ages there is little to report on anti-Semitism in the Christian theological and practical sense does not mean that anti-Semitic atrocities did not take place in some parts of the world at the time. After the Persians were expelled from Palestine in 628 by the Byzantine emperor Heraclius, who had been defeated earlier in the battle of Nineveh, a terrible persecution of Jews began. Wikipedia records under Heraclius (Febr. 14 2011): "*Historian Al-Tabari writes that Heraclius dreamt of a new kingdom of the 'circumcised man' that would be victorious against all its enemies. After telling his court his dream, his patricians, who did not know of the rise of Islam in Arabia [whose children are circumcised], advised him to send orders to behead every Jew in his dominion.*" The Persians had always been the defenders of Judaism and it is understandable that when Prophet Muhammad heard the news of Heraclius' capture of Jerusalem (on Hudaybiyya day - an Islamic celebration), that he received this news with joy (cf. Moshe Gil). The extermination decree affected the entire Byzantine empire with repercussions in the Christian states on the North African coast. And it is plausible that the 'Spanish Tribulation' was not entirely unrelated: a wave of looting, torture and crucifi-

xions of the poor Jewish citizens engulfed the Byzantine empire that was fast approaching its evening, because by the time of Heraclius' death in 641, the Islamists had already penetrated as far as Egypt.

The chains of ups and downs and outbreaks of violence were not an exclusively Jewish affair, and a distinction should be made between laws that imposed restrictions on the Jews and their observance, which was often much more lenient, albeit not without a ransom payment. A sad exception was the 'Spanish Tribulation', which began after the conversion of King Reccared in 587. These persecutions were more politically than religiously motivated. The whole gamut was covered from dispossession, exile, forced baptism, torture and manslaughter. It is worth mentioning that at the Fourth Council of Toledo in 633, it was decided that Jewish children, whether forcibly baptised or not, should be deprived of parental rights so as to receive a Christian education. This led to many expulsions, say child thefts, until the mid-19th century.³⁰⁾ Given the above, it makes sense that when the Moorish conquerors invaded Hispania, the Jews welcomed them with cheers in all cities. But again, in general and in other countries, the Jews led a relatively quiet existence. It was not until the beginning of the second millennium that things developed in an absolutely negative direction.

During the Crusades, hostility against the Jews radicalised. Initially intended to resist the furious advance of the Seljuk Turks, they soon took on as their main goal the liberation of Jerusalem. The Jews in the traversed areas were an easy target. Because the Jew was the stubborn and guilty enemy of God, the thinking went, conversion was an unachievable task and any dead Jew was better than a living one. At the first crusade (1096-99), the pope gave the crusaders absolution for their sins even before they had been committed, which was considered a licence to hang out the beast.³¹⁾ In the pre-days of the crusade, the crusaders besieged Worms in Germany. The local bishop tried to save the Jewish population, but failed and 800 were killed. In total, some 12,000 died in these black days prior to the Crusades. This gruesome persecution is seen by Jews as a "kiddush ha-Shem", as a suffering for the sanctification of God's Name. The victims are still remembered everywhere in the weekly Sabbath service.

In 1099, Jerusalem was taken. The Jews were gathered in the synagogue and burned alive there, while soldiers marched around singing "*Christ we adore Thee*". The second crusade (1144-47) was no better. A dissident monk, a certain Rodolphe preached that it was better to hold a crusade at home than in distant lands. His preachings were followed by massacres in Strasbourg, Cologne, Mainz, Worms, Speyer, Würzburg, and in other French and German cities. The madness was finally stopped by the efforts of Bernard of Clairvaux, the most imposing figure of his time. He told Rodolphe in person:

30) Pope Benedict XIV (1740-58) included relevant canon 60 of the Fourth Council of Toledo in the general canon law, which was only deleted when the new canon law was accepted in 1917.

31) In 1094 or 1095 the Byzantine emperor sent an envoy to the Pope asking for aid against the Seljuq Turk Mohammedans, who had taken nearly all of Asia Minor from him. At the Council of Clermont in 1095, Pope Urban addressed a great crowd and urged all to go to the aid of the Greeks and to recover the Holy City from the rule of the "infidels". The acts of the Council have been lost, but we have five accounts of the address in the "Papal Admonition for the Crucades", that were written by men who were then present. Fulcher of Chartres notes that the Pope said: "All who die by the way, whether by land or by sea, or in battle against the pagans, shall have immediate remission of sins. This I grant them through the power of God with which I am invested." Elsewhere the term martyrdom is used. What lacks, as far as we know, is a limiting condition that bloodshed should be prevented whenever and wherever possible and that killing for the sake of killing does not justify the killer, whether or not it was done during a just or Holy War.

«« It is good that you go off to fight the Ishmaelites (Turks). But whoever touches a Jew to take his life is like one who had touched the apple of the eye of Jesus, for the Jews are his flesh and bone. My disciple Rodolphe has spoken in error, for it is said in the Psalms (59:11, 13): *“Do not kill them, lest my people go under. Scatter them by Your power and bring them down, O Lord our shield. Consume them in wrath, consume them, that no track be found.”* »»

For the Jews, the Crusades signaled a terrible decline in their fortunes. For centuries onwards they found themselves subjected to mob-violence, libelous accusations, and expulsions. From the 13th century onwards, Christian art did not let itself go either. In degrading ways, the Jews were depicted as riding a boar and sucking her nipples; he holds up her tail to eat the excrement; a Jewish woman does not bear children but piglets, which are then raised by a filthy pig. The ‘Jewish pig’ can still be seen in sculptures and carvings decorating numerous church columns, friezes and choir stalls, especially in Germany. This had an undeniable effect on souring popular sentiment.

The Fourth Lateran Council of 1215, a large and important council, saw fit to restrict the Jews in many ways. It decreed that Jews living in Christian lands should wear a distinctive badge on their clothing, generally a yellow ring known as the rouelle or rotella (wheel). Sometimes it was a solid circle, in certain countries partially colored. In England it had the shape of the stone tablets bearing the Ten Commandments, usually of a saffron hue. It also happened that, in addition, they were obliged to wear hats of a peculiar shape. The result was to set the Jews apart from the other men as an inferior kind, liable to various insults and also to assaults.

The Lateral Council established that during Eucharist the consecrated bread and wine change into the real flesh and blood of our Saviour, which however take on the appearance of bread and wine. From then on charges of desecration of the Host were followed by violent attacks. The first one was the Berlitz case of 1243 in Germany, when the entire Jewish community was exterminated on the accusation of stealing a Host and putting needles through it. In Prague, in 1389, the accusation was of attacking a monk who carried a Host. As a result three thousand Jews were massacred. In total about 150 instances of the charge have been recorded, in many cases leading to massacres.

9 – Expulsions and Massacres

A book can be filled with the expulsions the Jews have suffered, the first one being from England in 1290. Until then, Jews had been able to evade deportation decrees by being mock-baptised. A well-known case is King Dagobert’s decree, on the advice of the Byzantine monarch Heraclius, that Jews had to leave France unless they were ‘spontaneously’ baptised. We write the year 629. The expulsion from England in 1290 had economic motives. Many noblemen, indebted to Jewish moneylenders, wished to rid themselves of their creditors, who were the official tax collectors for the Crown. Not the king was hated for it, but the Jews. The common people had been conditioned to hate Jews by centuries of antisemitic calumnies and accusations of ritual murder. The first distinct case of blood libel in Europe was that of Norwich in England in 1144, but the first accusation are much older and did not only apply to Jews, but also Christians. (see Encyclopaedia Judaica 2nd ed.) Also in Chaucer’s “Canterbury Tales”, written a century after the expulsion, the Jews are accused of ritual murder and Shakespeare’s character, called Shylock, collects his debt in human flesh. They were expelled from France in 1306 and 1394; from Hungary between 1349 and 1360; from Austria in 1421; and the list goes on. Often, if allowed to stay, they were confined to the ghetto.

The getthos were a papal invention, although the Jews by their own choice inassimilated in the general populations (and essentially inassimilatable) did not really object. It gave

them a certain measure of independence and it allowed them to keep their cherished identity. After the papal bull “Cum nimis absurdum” in 1555, enunciating the absurdity to let the Jews have access to our society and even to live among us, who through their own fault and all their doing would have been condemned by God to eternal slavery, Pope Paul IV ordered the segregation of Jews in ghettos. Subsequently they sprang up everywhere in Europe, only to be rescinded in 1870. In doing so, he followed in the footsteps of Pope Eugenius IV, who in 1442 banned Jews and Christians from having meals together, echoing a crowd of declarations from earlier times.

We have the Spanish Inquisition with its atrocities, though it did not cause many victims if compared to the regular massacres by the populace. We have the rabid anti-Semitic writings of Martin Luther, of which Hitler was fond. We have the Chmielnitzki massacres of 1648-49. Chmielnitzki was an Ukrainian, whose Cossacks slaughtered well over 100,000 Jews at a time when world Jewry numbered about a million and a half. They did not just kill, but invented the most cruel methods. The list goes on and on, and attempts to put a stop to these abuses achieved nothing. Robert Michael says of this in “A History of Catholic Anti-Semitism” : ³²⁾

«« The Papacy retreated from the general protection that the policy of Gregory the Great had offered the Jews. [Several cities and princes awarded the Jews civil charters that protected them. But in times of crisis, these charters became almost worthless.] Papal letters failed to protect Jews largely because, reflecting the Church’s ambivalence toward Jews, they never guaranteed them any fundamental, social, legal, or political rights. However tenuous, the Jews’ ‘right’ to exist as Jews under Roman Law became a ‘privilege’ under the medieval and modern papacy. The papal policy of protection asserted only that Jews should not be murdered; popes could withdraw any concessions the Church allowed them at any time and for any reason. »

That is the sad final chord.



32) “A History of Catholic Antisemitism – the dark side of the Church” by Robert Michael - Palgrave Macmillan, New York # 2008 (p. 82).

APPENDIX 1

• Napoleon's Great Sanhedrin speaks out in favour of the 'Sovereign Pontiffs'

Napoleon intended the assimilation of Jews and expected a Jewish Council to give him answers that made it seem as if they were in support of his wish. And so he came up with the idea to revive the Great Sanhedrin, the Supreme Court of the Jewish people that had functioned in classical antiquity and in a restricted capacity during the Roman occupation, which meant that the death sentence on Jesus Christ had to be pronounced by the Roman governor (otherwise the Sanhedrin would have passed it). The Great Sanhedrin was disbanded during the Bar Kochba revolt (132-135), though in some form it still functioned until the beginning of the 5th century. The name was chosen to imply that it had the authority of the original Sanhedrin. Just as the Great Sanhedrin in ancient times had 71 men, this convention had to have 71 participants (two-thirds of them rabbis and one-third laymen). In preparation, Napoleon convened in 1806 an "Assembly of Notables." He put before them twelve questions, and on Oct. 6, 1806, this assembly issued a proclamation to all the Jewish communities of Europe, inviting them to send delegates to a newly instituted Great Sanhedrin. The proclamation, written in Hebrew, French, German, and Italian, speaks in extravagant terms of the importance of this revived institution and of the greatness of its imperial benefactor. The Assembly of Notables was to elect the members of the Sanhedrin, and notify the Jewish communities of Europe *"that they may send deputies worthy of communicating back to them."* The Great Sanhedrin was officially convened on Feb. 9, 1807, four days after the adjournment of the Assembly of Notables. The final meeting was on March 9 and a few weeks later the official report was agreed upon.

While these actions by Napoleon aroused in many Jews of Germany the hope that as a result they would be granted the right to citizenship, others looked upon it as a political contrivance, and rightly so. When in the war against Prussia (1806-07) Napoleon invaded Poland and the Jews rendered great services to his army, he remarked, laughingly: *"The Sanhedrin is at least useful to me."*

The questions to be answered were:

1. Is it lawful for Jews to have more than one wife?
2. Is divorce allowed in the Jewish religion, and if it is, is it allowed even in contradiction to the codes of French law?
3. Does Jewish law permit a Jewess to marry a Christian man, or a Jew to marry a Christian woman, or may they marry only other Jews?
4. In the eyes of Jews, are Frenchmen who are not Jewish, considered to be their brethren or strangers?
5. What type of conduct does Jewish law prescribe toward non-Jewish Frenchmen?
6. Do the Jews who are born in France, and have been granted citizenship by the laws of France, truly acknowledge France as their country? Are they bound to defend it, to follow its laws, to follow the directions of the civil and court authorities of France?
7. Who elects rabbis?
8. What kind of judicial power do rabbis exercise over the Jews?
9. If there is rabbinical jurisdiction over the Jews, is it regulated by the laws of the Jewish religion or is it merely a custom existing among Jews?
10. Are there professions from which Jews are excluded by Jewish law?
11. Does Jewish law prohibit Jews from taking usury from other Jews?
12. Does Jewish law prohibit Jews from taking usury from non-Jews?

Napoleon did not just have a passing interest in these questions. The Assembly of Notables, indeed, prepared answers in keeping with Napoleon's wishes, as they were not about to risk their necks. Additionally, many of them truly believed in Napoleon's program as a well-meaning endeavour.

As far as divorce was concerned, they answered that it was valid in Jewish law only if it was also approved by civil authorities – thereby saying that in a country that banned divorce, such as Italy, Jews would never get divorced. That was patently false, because Jews who, for hundreds of years had lived in Italy, always had been granted divorces. But that was the answer Napoleon wanted to hear, because it implicated that the Jewish religion was subservient to the State and would not do anything against the wishes of the State. Similarly, for all other questions, they provided the answer Napoleon wanted to hear, which was not necessarily what Jewish law required.

Napoleon hoped the answers would help him structure Jewish life so that mixed marriages would be allowed and all professions would be open to Jews and that they could move to all parts of the country, and so forth. In short, he hoped that through his program, within a generation or so, the orthodox Jewish communities under his control would be decimated and Jewish authority, especially religious authority, would be undermined. Though his main objective failed, the assimilation of Jews in Europe gained a firmer foothold in his time, which continued especially in the second half of the 19th century, but this was due to other factors and was triggered by the Damascus Affair, which marked a turning point in history. (see App. 4)

The Great Sanhedrin's most prestigious member was undoubtedly Abraham van Keulen, who was to be the president of the Jewish community and the first chief rabbi of France until 1826. Le Chevalier P.L.B. Drach who, before becoming a Catholic, was nominated to become chief rabbi of Paris, made in 1843 an interesting comment on this Sanhedrin, especially regarding the Jewish view of the papacy – which was not part of the questions that had to be answered: ³³⁾

«« (...) One must admit that the Jews of all times acknowledged the fact that throughout all the misfortunes of their scattered nation, they had always found refuge and protection in the Catholic clergy. At the first meeting of the Great Sanhedrin, convened by Napoleon, they took the opportunity to testify solemnly and publicly of their gratitude to the Sovereign Pontiffs (the popes), as well as to the prelates and other members of the clergy. One certainly cannot claim that they had been influenced; [after all, the French Revolution had turned against the Church]. This statement is hardly known [and so it still is, now more than 200 years later]. It deserves a place in the annals of history. It has been filed in the archives of "le Ministère des Cultes" (Ministry of Public Worship). »»

Here is the text of this important document, recorded in full in the minutes:

- The delegates of the Hebrew Synod of the French Empire and the Kingdom of Italy on 30 May this year decreed, in grateful remembrance of all the successive benefactions that the Christian clergy have rendered to the Israelites who stayed in the various nations of Europe in past centuries;
- With great gratitude for the reception several Pontiefs and a number of other Church leaders prepared for the Israelites in different periods, while the barbarism, coupled with prejudice and ignorance, persecuted and chased the Jews within their societies;
- That the expression of these sentiments be recorded in the minutes of this day that they may forever remain an authentic testimony to the gratitude of the Israelites of

33) Taken from: "De l'harmonie entre l'Église et la Synagogue", Vol. 1 note 40 (pp. 237-41).

this assembly for the favours shown to previous generations by church leaders in the various countries of Europe;

- That, in addition, a copy of these sentiments will be transmitted to His Excellency the Minister of Public Worship.

This decision (writes Drach) was adopted after a very remarkable speech by Mr Isaac Samuel Avigdor, deputy of (the French department of) Alpes-Maritimes, from which we have taken the following passage: St Athanasius, Book I, says: *"It is an odious heresy to want to persuade by force and beatings and imprisonments those whom one has not been able to convince by reason."* "Nothing is more opposed to religion - says St Justin martyr (Book V) - *than violence.*" *"Shall we persecute those - says St Augustine - whom God tolerates?"* Lactancius, says (Book III): *"Compulsory religion is no longer religion; we must persuade and not impose; religion cannot be forced in any way."* St Bernhard says: *"Recommend and do not impose."*



Clement VI

Therefore, usually only ignorance and prejudice are to blame for the afflictions and persecutions you have so often been victims of, since Christian morality everywhere teaches love and brotherhood to one's neighbour. This is so true that this 'sublime' human and righteous virtue has often been put into practice by the truly educated Christians, and especially by the worthy representatives of this pure morality, which quenches passions and stirs virtue. It is on the basis of these sacred and moral principles that in other times 'the persecuted and expelled Jews from various parts of Europe' **were protected and welcomed by the Roman pontiffs in the Papal States**, and Church leaders often defended them in the various nations of this continent.

By the mid-7th century, St Gregory defended the Jews and protected them throughout the Christian world. In the 10th century, the bishops of Spain opposed with all their energy the people who wanted to slaughter them. The pontiff Alexander II wrote a letter to his bishops praising them for their wise stance on the matter. In the 11th century, Jews in large numbers in the dioceses of Uzès and Clermont were vigorously defended by the bishops. St Bernhard defended them in the 12th century against the fury of the Crusades. Innocent II and Alexander III also defended them. St Gregory IX, in the 13th century in both England and France and Spain, protected them from the great calamity that threatened them: on pain of excommunication, he forbade forcing their consciences and disturbing their festivals. Clement V did more than defend them; he provided them with resources for education. Clement VI gave them asylum in Avignon [where the pope was then staying], while they were persecuted throughout the rest of Europe. By the middle of the same century (the 14th), the bishop of Spire prevented the 'liberation' [of the Jews from the episcopal palace where they had been given refuge], which the debtors demanded of the Jews in high tones, under the so often used pretext of usury. As for the following centuries, Nicholas II wrote to the Inquisition to prevent them from forcibly converting the Jews to Christianity. Clement XIII calmed the anxiety of heads of families, who were alarmed at the fate of their children who had often been snatched from their own mother's breast. It would be easy to list an endless series of other expressions of love from Church leaders, who stood up for the Israelites at different periods and were imbued with a sense of what a person, especially a religious person, should do.

Already strong human compassion had in past centuries been able to muster the necessary courage to defend unfortunate people who were barbarously submitted to the mercy of terrible hypocrisy and savage superstition. Nevertheless, these noble men could not,

as a reward for their humane courage, look forward to that sweet satisfaction in themselves, which the works of brotherly love produce in pure hearts. (To which Drach adds:) *“To overlook in a religious assembly that there is something else beyond the grave is surely a strange thoughtlessness.”*



The Great Sanhedrin of 1807 by Édouard Moyse (1867)

The ever hapless and almost constantly oppressed people of Israel have never before had the means nor the opportunity to show their gratitude for so many benefits; all the sweeter it is to bear witness to this now because they are people who have not acted out of self-interest and thus deserve double respect. For eighteen centuries, the circumstance in which we find ourselves [now here] has been the only one that has occurred to bring out the feelings that live in our hearts. This special and happy circumstance, which we owe to our exalted and immortal Emperor, is also the most appropriate, the most beautiful, as well as the most glorious to express our total gratitude to the benefactors of all countries, especially the Church leaders and their predecessors. Gentlemen, let us therefore devote ourselves to taking advantage of this memorable occasion and offering them this just gift of gratitude that we feel compelled to offer; let our total gratitude reverberate in this space: let us ‘solemnly’ express our heartfelt thanks for the accumulated benefactions with which they have lavished the previous generations. (The minutes end thus:) The meeting applauded after Mr Avigdor’s speech: it deliberated to record it in full in the minutes and have it printed, and has thus decided.

This (writes Drach) is the expression of the assembly, of the official body of the Jewish nation. The present pope (Gregory XVI), this sovereign with such a sensitive heart, great, generous, benevolent, gives so many favours to the Jews of Rome, that in token of their gratitude they have given a great gift consisting of a work of various Hebrew calligraphies, so bound together that the workmanship dwarfs the wealth of gold. All the public pamphlets [the dailies] commented on this wonderful work at the time. The parts of this collection are poetic compositions singing the virtues of the *“sovereign who has shown mercy to the scattering of Judah”*, and contains prayers for the preservation and prosperity of the sovereign, *“so good a father to all his subjects”*. What the Israelites of Rome expressed in this tome, the latter want to repeat with great conviction in all their conversations with Christians.

Early this year (1843), Drach continued, the Tiber flooded the Jewish residential area of Rome. During the successive disaster days, the Holy Father sent boats with abundant supplies to the dwelling places of the numerous Israelis who had fled to the upper floors of their houses.

APPENDIX 2

Esau, the Firstborn, namely, her Son Jesus Christ

In his famous book “Treatise on True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin”, Saint Louis Marie Grignon de Montfort (1673-1716) gives a different and splendid explanation of the incident of the ‘stealing’ of the Blessing, whereby Jacob is dressed in sheep’s skin by his caring mother Rebekkah, image of the Blessed Virgin, a story based on Genesis 27. Here follow sections from his book (206-07):

«« Once this good Mother has received our complete offering with our merits and satisfactions and has stripped us of our own garments, she cleanses us and makes us worthy to appear without shame before our Heavenly Father. She clothes us in the clean, new, precious and fragrant garments of Esau, the firstborn, namely, her son Jesus Christ. She keeps these garments in her house, that is to say, she has them at her disposal. For she is the treasurer and only and eternal dispenser of the merits and virtues of Jesus Christ her son. She gives and distributes them to whom she pleases, when she pleases, as she pleases, and as much as she pleases.

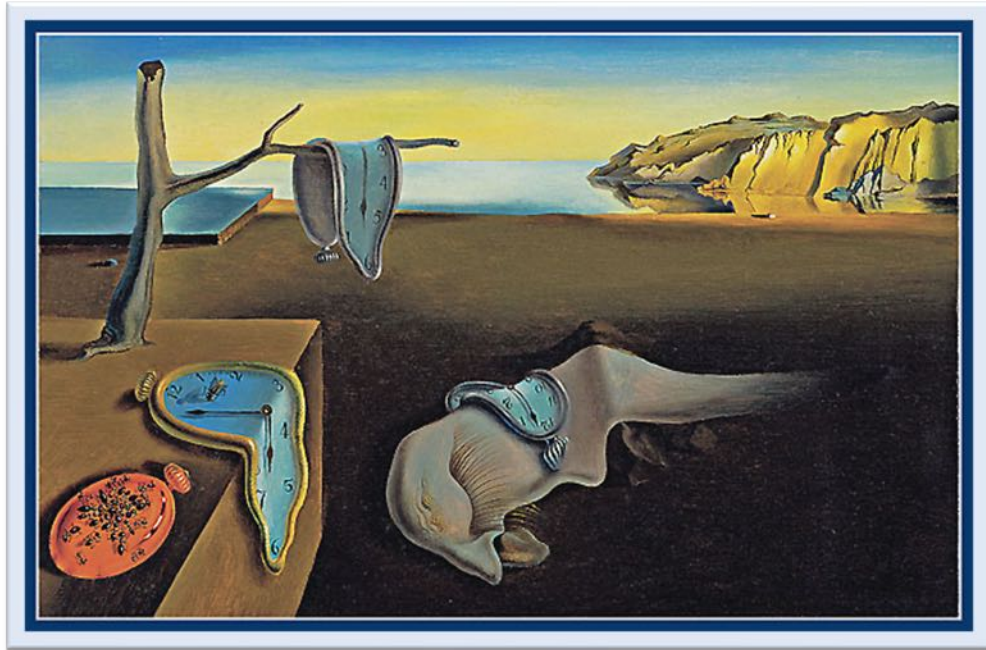
She covers the neck and hands of her servants with the skins of the goats that have been killed and flayed, that is, she adorns them with the merits and worth of their own good actions. In truth, she destroys and nullifies all that is impure and imperfect in them. She preserves and enhances this good so that it adorns and strengthens their neck and hands – that is, she gives them the strength to carry the yoke of the Lord – and the skill to do great things for the glory of God and the salvation of their poor brothers and sisters.

She imparts new perfume and fresh grace to those garments and adornments by adding to them the garments of her own wardrobe of merits and virtues. She bequeathed these to them before her departure for Heaven, as was revealed by a holy nun of the last century, who died a holy death. Thus all her domestics, that is, all her servants and slaves, are clothed with double garments, her own and those of her son: “*All her household is clothed with double garments.*” (Prov. 31:21) This is why they have nothing to fear from the coldness of Jesus Christ, white as snow, which sinners, naked and stripped as they are of the merits of Jesus Christ and the Blessed Virgin, will be unable to endure.

Finally, she obtains for them the Heavenly Father’s blessing. As they are the youngest born and adopted, they are by the law of nature not entitled to it. Clad in new, precious, and sweet-smelling garments, with body and soul well-prepared and dressed, they confidently approach the couch of their Heavenly Father. He hears their voice and recognises it as the voice of a sinner. He feels their hands covered with skins, inhales the aroma of their garments. He partakes with joy of what Mary, their Mother, has prepared for Him, recognising in it the merits and good odour of his Son and his Blessed Mother.

He gives them a twofold blessing, the blessing of the dew of Heaven (Gen. 27:28), namely, divine grace, which is the seed of glory. “*God has blessed us in Christ Jesus with every spiritual blessing.*” (Eph. 1:3) And also the blessing of the fertility of the earth, for as a provident Father, he gives them their daily bread and an apportioned plentiness of the goods of the earth. »»

THE JEWISH SOUL IN THE TURMOIL OF NATIONS



The Persistence of Memory, Salvador Dali

• The Spanish Fury came forth like Fire •

This contribution explores a historical perspective on the Jewish people, examining their perceived brilliance and contributions alongside a recurring history of persecution. The author posits a unique theory linking their intellect to King Solomon and his numerous wives. The text also discusses historical instances of anti-Semitism, such as the Spanish Inquisition, and considers the complex motivations of both persecutors and Jewish converts. Furthermore, the source investigates the concept of Jewish sorcery and its historical perception, referencing a contemporary Jewish author who argues for its integral role in Judaism. Finally, the text critiques homeopathic practice as a veiled occult instrument, potentially involving negative spiritual influences, treading on slippery ground, where the salvation of our soul is at stake.

Article — 2

The history of the Jewish people is one of a double-sided coin. The head side of the coin shows their incontrovertable great contribution in the fields of science, philosophy, the arts and to the worlds of finance and trade, and the wide recognition for it. But whenever they took on too high a profile in those fields the coin was tossed and the tails side of the coin revealed ghettos and persecution inspired by the populace or the higher strata of society. To be honest, there is some dark shade in the doings of the Jewish people, as of course there is some dark shade in the doings of every nation and people, be it that the Jewish intellect is greater than of each other, and the latter explains why they have always been able to bend things to their will again and again.

King Solomon was the wisest man ever, because 1 Kings 3:12 promises: *"I'll make you wiser than anyone who has ever lived or ever will live."* Solomon had also exceptionally many wives, for in 1 Kings 11:1-3 is written:

«« King Solomon loved many foreign women: apart from Pharaoh's daughter, he also loved women from Moab, Ammon, Edom and Sidon, and Hittite women. They were from the nations about whom the Lord had said to the Israelites: *"You must not associate with them and they must not associate with you, or they will tempt you to go and serve their gods."* It was precisely to these women that Solomon felt attracted. He had 700 main wives and 300 concubines, and these made him unfaithful. As Solomon got older, some of his wives led him to worship their gods. »»

It is no exaggeration to assume that his wives have given him at least 5,000 children, who through marriages have passed on Solomon's intellect to the Jewish people. This explains why they are so brilliant, more than any other people on earth and more than the other tribes of Israel. That intellect works in both directions, towards the good or towards the bad, and is therefore as well a blessing as a curse.

I like to present to you the eminent Catholic historian William Thomas Wals, who in his "Characters of the Inquisition" from 1940, gives an exposition of the terrible persecution of the Jews under Isabella la Catholica, who reigned in Spanish Castile at the turn of the 15th century. It is very difficult to get a balanced view on these matters. I am convinced that the final verdict on the how and why of the persecution of the Jews, in different places and times, has to come from the Jews themselves. A balanced view is only possible after they will have turned back into the fold with the Good Shepherd at their head, the long awaited Messiah of the House of Zerach, which is bound to happen in the Time of Nations, also known as the Thousand Years Reign of Peace or just the Millennium.³⁴⁾ For this soul searching the Jews themselves have the best papers. They should have documentation not readily available elsewhere that throws light on the question. But documentation is not all. It is the interpretation which counts. We Christians are certainly not in a position for an objective verdict, because we have forsaken our duty of intercession and have taken an active part in the infliction of harm, and have even initiated it.

Says the Apostle Paul in the letter to the Romans (3:9-19):

«« Jews, as well as Gentiles, are ruled by sin, just as I have said. The Scriptures tell us: 'No one is acceptable to God! Not one of them understands or even searches for God. They have all turned away and are worthless. There isn't one person who does right. Their words are like an open pit, and their tongues are good only for telling lies. Each word is as deadly as the fangs of a snake, and they say nothing but bitter curses. These people quickly become violent. Wherever they go, they leave ruin and destruction. They don't know how to live in peace. They don't even fear God.'

We know that everything in the Law was written for those who are under its power. The Law says these things to stop anyone from making excuses and to let God show that the whole world is guilty. »»

34) In the Millennium Age, the kingdom will have been restored over Israel, which as a matter of course will then have become the leader nation with a prince of Zerachite lineage, referred to by modern prophets, such as Marie Julie Jahenny, as "the Great Monarch". Christus is of the Peresh line, and both patriarchs, Zerach and Peresh, are sons of Judah.

We Christians have been all too often not only 'in' this world but also 'of' this world. The blood of Abel sticks to Christianity. We Christians should have been mediating in the spirit of Moses (Ex. 32:11-13) exemplified by the chapter-9 prayers of Ezra, Nehemiah and Daniel. Faithful to Daniel 9:20 and Luke 18:9-14 this should have been done in a spirit of great contrition and confession of own sins, for all are ruled by sin and the whole world is guilty in front of God, not only the Jews. This Paul understood. Does not he say in the letter to the Romans (9:1-3): *"I tell the truth and I am not lying when I say my heart is broken and I am in great sorrow. I would gladly be placed under God's curse and be separated from Christ if I could help my brethren with that, my kin according to the flesh, who are Israelites."*

Let us look at a passage from "Characters of the Inquisition" by William Thomas Walsh (English Ed. ch. V pp. 141-46), that discusses the initial stage that resulted in the Spanish persecution of Jews at the end of the 15th century:

«« In mediaeval Spain, under the Mohammedan rule, the Jews attained a high state of culture and prosperity. They grew rich on silks, slaves and usury. They excelled in medicine, and in Aristotelian studies. Nor were they persecuted at first by the advancing Christians [who reconquered land from the Moors in Spain]. Saint Fernando, on taking Córdoba from the Saracens, turned over four mosques to the large Jewish population, to convert into synagogues, and gave them one of the most delightful parts of the city for their homes, on two conditions: that they refrain from reviling the Christian religion, and from proselytizing among Christians. The Jews made both promises, and kept neither. Yet for a long time they were undisturbed and continued to flourish, partly because they were useful to many of the kings. Their population, in Castile alone, must have been from four to five millions at the close of the 13th century (estimate based on a tax paid of more than 2,5 mln maravedis, which divided by the per head taxation of 3 gives the number of male adult Jews). So powerful had they grown by the 14th century that in many respects they were above and beyond the law. The laws against blasphemy, for example, could not be enforced against them. They could encourage heresy, and, in defense could claim the freedom of worship granted to the Jews. Business, property and even government passed into their hands. The Kings, in return for loans, would 'farm out' to them the right to impose and collect public taxes on a generous commission basis. A great deal of bitterness against Pedro the Cruel arose from the fact that he gave his Jewish friends complete control of his government; a circumstance that led his enemies to call him a Jewish changeling, and contributed to his denunciation by a Pope as *"a fautor of Jews and Moors, a propagator of infidelity, and a slayer of Christians"*.

Unhappily the popular hatred against the Spanish Jews was not wholly without cause. They were disliked not for practising the things that Moses taught, but for doing the things he had forbidden. They had profited hugely on the sale of fellow-beings as slaves, and practised usury as a matter of course, and flagrantly. As Lea notes, they demanded 40% interest at Cuenca (in between Valencia and Madrid) during the famine of 1326, when farmers needed money to buy wheat for sowing. They were much given to proselytizing, even by a sort of compulsion; thus they would force Christian servants to be circumcised, and urged their debtors, sometimes, to abjure Christ. Again, Moses had condemned blasphemers to death. Yet it was a custom of many Jews to blaspheme the Prophet for whom Moses had warned them to prepare; they made mockery and travesty of the ceremonies of the Christian religion; they jibed at priests and nuns. Moses had said: *"Neither let there be found among you any wizard, nor charmer, nor any one that consulteth pythonic spirits, nor fortune tellers, or that seeketh the truth*

from the dead. For the Lord abhorreth all these things.” (Deut. 18:10-12) Yet the Spanish Jews, by contamination no doubt from the superstitious Mohammedans, were often found busying themselves for financial profit in what the people called ‘hechicerias’ (literally: doings) – witchcraft, black magic, astrology, alchemy, the selling of love potions, the use of charms to bless the marriage bed, or, at the instance of arevengeful rival, to render the young husband impotent – for which purpose the genitalia of a rooster were sometimes insinuated under a nuptial couch, or Cabbalistic horrors scrawled under a window. There was a widespread fear, shared by some holy persons, of the power of witches and wizards to ‘bind’ with spells and charms.

(...) What hurt the Jewish most in the perception of Christians was the general belief that behind the mysterious cohesion and unity of conduct and purpose, observed among them, there existed a central control, in the inner circles perhaps of a modernized Sanhedrin, which directed a conspiracy to build up a Jewish State, a state within the state. Was this an illusion born of fear, envy, jealousy? So the Jews have replied. Yet the illusion, if such it was, has been persistent.

(...) This conviction, whether true or false, resulted in the widespread [forced] conversions that followed the sickening massacres of (the Jews in) 1391. How could the Christians think otherwise, when they saw one of the most illustrious rabbis, Selemoh ha-Levi, long respected by Jews and Christians alike for his high character and profound learning, becoming a Christian, a Thomist philosopher, and a Bishop, and finally publishing two dialogues in which he categorically declared that the Jews were bent upon ruling Spain? It was this Jewish Bishop of Burgos, also, who drew up the so-called Ordinance of Doña Catalina, which restricted the activities, professions, and so on, of Jews and Moors – though another Jewish convert, Diego Árias Dávila allowed the Jews to evade it, especially as regarded the profitable farming of taxes. Still another Jew, Fray Alonso de Espina, confessor to Henry IV and Rector of the University of Salamanca, wrote and published in 1459 his “Fortalitium Fidei”, one of the most bitterly anti-Jewish documents in history. This opus was more violent against the Conversos [Jewish converts] than against the Jews of the synagogue, and suggested that if an Inquisition were established in Castile, large numbers of them would be found to be only pretending Christians, engaged in judaizing and in undermining the Faith they professed.

It has been the custom of Jewish apologists to dismiss all such instances with an explanation which we can understand, and have some sympathy for, but cannot accept. In this view Selemoh ha-Levi, and all such, were turncoats and renegades; they became Christians in time of persecution through fear, and tried to win the favor of their new associates by confirming their darkest prejudices. This theory undoubtedly has some evidence to support it. It does not explain away, however, the undeniable sincerity of numerous Jewish conversions in times when Christians, not Jews, were being persecuted. Saint Peter and Saint Paul did not improve their worldly state when they went forth to preach in poverty what was certain to win for them an ignominious death. Some of the notable Jewish converts of our day have become Catholics at a great cost in popularity and material advantages. As for Selemoh ha-Levi, the theory of hypocrisy robs his career and his strong character of all their consistency and righteousness, and makes of him a ‘factotum irrealis’ (unrealistic character). He was converted before the massacres of 1391. He must have lived through other persecutions of his people, and must have suffered, like every Jew, from unjust and uncharitable contempt, without giving up his ancestral religion. Yet he was an honest man, and

when he saw the light of truth, he followed it, even when it led him, like Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, to denounce the sins of his own people, to call upon them to give up the golden calf of usury and luxury and turn back to the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob, to the Father of Christ. For this, naturally, he got little thanks from men resolved not to see what he saw. There is no other reasonable explanation for the hostile attitude of such honest convert Jews as Pablo de Santa Maria toward those Jews who, as pretending Christians, made a mockery of her sacraments, while they grew rich and powerful under her protection, and like their ancestors of old, sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play. The wholesale conversions seemed to have given to this opportunist type of Jew a chance to eat his cake and have it too. He could enjoy all the advantages of going to Mass on Sunday, and going to Synagogue on Saturday. His children were barred from no profitable and honorable occupations. They could marry, thanks to his money, into noble impoverished families, and succeed to the proudest titles in Castile. They could become priests, even bishops. There was Andres Gomalz, parish priest of San Martin de Talavera, who, according to his own confession, celebrated Mass from 1472 to 1486 without believing in it, or having the proper intention; and heard confessions without ever granting absolution. There was Fray Garcia de Tapate, prior of the great Jeronymite monastery of Toledo, who, as he elevated the Host at Mass, used to mutter: "*Get up, little Peter, and let the people look at you*", and would turn his back on the penitents in his confessional, instead of giving them absolution.

This situation could not go on indefinitely without an explosion; and unfortunately there were many explosions of the worst possible sort... »»

The accusation of witchcraft, discussed by Walsh, seems strange, but even in our time this is still practiced. In 2003 Gershon Winkler published his "Magic of the Ordinary". The introductory chapter states that he forsook the path of an ultra-Orthodox Rabbi, which for a time he trod in the suburb of Brooklyn, New York. The back cover says:

«« From sorcery to animal totems, buzzard feathers to hawk spirits, sacred circles to healing rituals, this book offers us a rare and generous encounter with a rich body of wisdom that has been long neglected and even longer misunderstood. "Magic of the Ordinary" reconfigures our understanding of Judaism as a spiritual path that is founded on a conscientious and sacred relationship with the magic of the physical universe. (And on p. 15:) Judaism used to practice a way of consciousness that was very much rooted in downhome earthiness. The divine, they taught, could be experienced only through its physical manifestation. (...) They considered the earth and her children far more representative of the so-called Utterance of God (the sayings of creation) than the excessively revered scriptures penned by their prophets. This book (it continues on the back cover) is an initial attempt to restore recognition of Judaism as a shamanic religion³⁵⁾ after centuries of

35) My dictionary says: "A shaman is someone regarded as having direct access to, and influence in, the hidden powers of nature, which are usually addressed during a trance and empowers him or her to guide souls, cure illnesses, etc. The shaman is associated today with certain indigenous peoples of Northern Asia and North America, but the general pattern of beliefs, rituals, and techniques associated with shamans is found almost universally in primitive cultures." In Great Britain such a person would be called a witch. The word is from 'wice' which according to some meant 'heath' (in German: Wiese); this implies that such a person is one with nature and the all embracing power of the universe. That sounds innocuous, but the famous Bible quote from Exodus 22:18 is clear in that respect: "You shall not permit a witch (or sorcerer) to live". The New Testament condemnation against witchcraft is found in the list of abominations of Galatians 5:20.

ideological suppression forced upon it by intolerant host cultures and religious systems. »»»

On the second page of his book Gershon Winkler writes:

«« Especially by the middle-ages, Christians considered the Jew as the magician par excellence, a reputation that ultimately turned against them since, as practitioners of the occult, they were regarded by the Church as demonic. *“In line with much popular Church teaching about the Jews through the centuries”*, writes Dan Cohn-Sherbok in ‘The Crucified Jew’ (1997), *“the Jewish population was perceived as possessing the attributes of both the Devil and witches (...) Dabbling in the occult, they were associated with devils and demons (...) Given such diabolical attributes, it is not surprising that the Jewish people were relegated to a sub-species of humanity, and as a result were butchered without remorse or guilt.”* Clearly, the Church did not tolerate any other form of spirituality than its own.

It continues on pp. 9-12: Rabbi Me’ir Ben Shim’on of Narbonne, still traumatized from the recent terror of the Crusades, went a bit overboard in trying to convince the Church that Judaism was a respectable religion that posed no threat to Christian beliefs and consisted of nothing that would be deemed heretical in the eyes of the Holy See. Ironically, in his polemical tract “Milchemet Mitzvah” (war of the commandments), written around 1235, he unwittingly offered ample evidence - to the contrary - of just how widespread meditation and sorcery actually was. His attempt, and those of other Jewish leaders, were well-meaning and noble but were to no avail. In the summer of 1239, the pope ordered the confiscation and burning of all sacred Jewish texts, from the revered Talmud to the esoteric writ of the Cabbala. A total of 24 wagonloads of handwritten books (no printing press, yet) perished in the fires of France alone,³⁶ bringing to a tragic end millennia of treasured Talmudic and Cabbalistic scholarship. (...) The Zohar only escaped the burnings by being multiplied at a non-Jewish shop. Certainly, the greater tragedy was the torching of thousands of Jewish people by the Church during this period as well as before and after, but the Jewish people lost as well an enormous chunk of not only their ancient wisdom texts but, along with those, their ancient shamanic mindset. (...) “Magic of the Ordinary”, then, is an initial attempt to recover the aboriginal Hebrew tradition and to redeem it from the chains and cobwebs of a centuries-old taboo that was forced upon it by the intolerance of host cultures and religious systems to which it has been subjected for 1,700 years. »»»

And elsewhere (p. 65): *“One of the most essential prerequisites for mastering Jewish sorcery is mastery of the Sacred Name.”* And he continues (pp. 80-86):

«« (In view of the foregoing) it comes as no shock that the Jewish people were singled out as a group, along with women as a group, during the centuries of witch hunts and relentless wars against sorcery and magic as discussed at the beginning

36) Nicholas Donin of La Rochelle was a Jewish convert to Christianity in early 13th cent. Paris. He is known for his role in the “Disputation of Paris” where he laid before Pope Gregory IX the charge that the Talmud is a pernicious and blasphemous work with virulent attacks on the Virginity of Mary and the moral conduct of Jesus. In the end, this resulted in the papal decree to publicly burn all available manuscripts of the Talmud. The decree was generally ignored, except in France, where the Jews were compelled under pain of death to surrender their books. In the 16th century there were six Talmud burnings; and in 1562 a Christian censorship of Hebrew books was instituted. Most editions of the Talmud now extant still carry the censor’s confirmation that these volumes are free of offensive material, which particularly applies to the omission of attacks on the Virgin Mary and our beloved Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

of this book. Sorcery was so common among the Jews that in 1254, for example, Louis IX had to issue a special decree forbidding the Jews of his domain from its practice. And when the Inquisition was established in the early middle-ages, it wasted no time going after Jews as sorcerers. Sorcery was not only commonplace amongst the rabbis but well saturated within the textual fabric of ancient and medieval Jewish literature and theology. So saturated, in fact, that even the advent of the Reform Jewish movement in the 'enlightened' 18th century failed abysmally in shattering the image of the Jew as a sorcerer or shaman. It was too late. Millenniums too late. (...) Many contemporary rabbis and scholars of Judaica have tried time and again to relegate the notion of sorcery in Judaism to the realm of superstition and folklore, endeavors remnant of centuries of trying to 'be like everyone else so they won't fear us or try to harm us'. The truth is that we are different, that we don't fit and don't belong to the predominantly Christian mindset and culture in which we live and to which we have been subjected over the past two millennia. Indeed, the primary sources dispute such pretensions at 'conforming' Judaism by clearly reminding us how sorcery is an integral part of Judaism, and not solely of Jewish mysticism. (...) the ancient Sanhedrin demanded mastery of sorcery as a prerequisite to membership in its court. It was taught by 3rd cent. Rabbi Yochanan that *"We do not assign to the Sanhedrin other than those who are tall in stature, masters of wisdom, masters of visioning, masters of eldering, and masters of sorcery."* (Bab. Sanhedrin 17a) (...) When I introduce fellow Jews to the world of sorcery in their own tradition, they often dismiss it as confined to minor, gnostic stuff, not realizing how integrated it really is within virtually every thread that constitutes the Jewish tradition. This is due to a lack of basic knowledge of Judaism, a malady that strikes seven out of ten Jews today, a tragedy that is unprecedented in Jewish history. The fact is, that woven into the fabric of even the supposedly legalistic discussions of the Talmud are numerous accounts of supernal events invoked by rabbis who dabbled in sorcery. »»



Our Coat of hair, or the Nature of the Occult

There is a somewhat typical prophecy by the Prophet Zechariah that indicates how God feels about so-called magic and divination. He tells us that in the messianic age, God will not allow any prophets to put on a coat of hair to lie. A coat of hair means they are governed by animal instincts. John the Baptist too wore a coat of hair,³⁷⁾ but God had purified him in the school of hardship which made him look more like an angel than a man. Even when they receive God's promptings, the lying prophets are like jammers producing their own sound, and on top of it they are terribly proud of it. The following verses are paraphrased:

«« On that day, is the divine word of Yahweh of hosts, I will chase out of the land the false prophets who are afflicted with an unclean spirit. If anyone dares to impersonate such a prophet, his very parents will say: *"You will not live because you speak lies in God's Name."* If that son nevertheless continues to act as a prophet of lies, his father and mother will pierce him so that he dies. On that day all such prophets will be ashamed of the visions they receive, and will not dare to clothe themselves to speak lies with a coat of hair (the worldly, even cosmic). Nay, such a person will say: *"I am not a prophet, only a farmer; I have had a cropland from childhood."* And if asked: *"Then where did the wounds in your hands come from?"* he will answer: *"They were inflicted in the house of my friends."* »»

To clarify the meaning of a coat of hair, or the magic out of the ordinary, i.e. of what lies locked up in the invisible part of the cosmos, we now turn to homeopathic methods as an example of an essentially occult practice, something that, according to Leviticus 19:31, we are not allowed to get involved with. Homeopathy is a system of medicine developed between 1790 and 1843 by Dr. Samuel Hahnemann, a German physician. Homeopathy functions at its best when the dilution of the active substance is so great that there are almost no molecules of the original substance left, or none at all. Hahnemann claimed that homeopathy functions by "a condensation of cosmic energy". With this kind of terminology we are in occult territory using an esoteric language that is very difficult to understand! Like reiki, it is healing with cosmic energy (energy healing). Thus defined, cosmic energy equals occult energy, i.e. hidden from the eye! A scientist cannot say how homeopathy works because the immeasurable is outside his field. Only healing can be observed because it does not work physically/chemically. There is also no placebo effect because it can cure animals. A psychosomatic cure in animals is impossible! It has been sufficiently demonstrated that homeopathy is a therapy that works, though it is not an allopathic medicine that works through the presence of a material substance. We are talking about immaterial substances here. Immaterial means

37) In Genesis 37, the coat of many colors of Patriarch Joseph, son of Jacob, is the ornate garment that his father gave him in a place called Vayeshev (וַיֵּשֶׁב - Hebrew for 'and he lived'). This iridescent dressing gown is antitype to a coat of hair and represents the unblemished prophetic gift Joseph had received from the most holy God, who has the supreme multi-coloured wisdom (Ps 104:24, Eph 3:10), which only He may call His own. The embroidered garment is also an image of God's creation, interweaving thousands of seemingly unrelated threads into one glorious pattern. The Popol Vuh ("The Nexus" by David Allen Deal, p. 16 #1993) by the way, mentions that Joseph's bones were carried off in a coffin during the Exodus while he was dressed in this fine garment (his shroud), a detail neither Flavius Josephus nor the Talmud cites, but which does not seem unlikely. In 1 Kings 19:19, Elijah throws the prophet's cloak at Elisha; again, that same image of a cloak and the gift of prophecy.

‘spiritual’. Now those substances too were created by God with a useful purpose in mind. What, then, is the problem? It is not so much those imperceptible substances or energies that are the problem in the acceptance of homeopathy by sincere Christians, but rather the creatures that have rebelled against God and begun to inhabit this space, harbouring little sympathy for us human beings for whom God has set aside a special destiny – to be envied. Practitioners of ‘energy healing’ prefer to speak of the ‘astral realm’ which, with its energies, lies in between the divine and the material. And this now, it is said, can be tapped through the homeopathic technique. The term astral comes from astrology and should rather be replaced with the Biblical term cosmos.

This astral realm, the Apostle Paul calls the heavenly realms: *“For we do not contend against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the world rulers of the darkness of this age, against the spiritual powers of evil in the heavenly realms.”* (Eph. 6:12) It seems logical that this realm must be traversed in one way or another (for some lightning fast) in order to arrive at our destination in the hereafter. It is the sensation of this in-between which corresponds to what is known in scientific circles as the “Near Death Experience” (NDE), a term we owe to Raymond Moody. It is this realm that should be overcome during our prayer, which sometimes only happens after persistent communal prayer, or through fasting. A breakthrough is visualized by the column of fire or cloud that rested on the tabernacle in the desert. (Ex. 40:34-38, Num. 9:15-19) Through this breakthrough, during their 40-years trek, the Israelites were protected from the evil powers, and could God more easily attend to the daily needs of his people. A similar breakthrough occurs each time during the Holy Sacrifice.

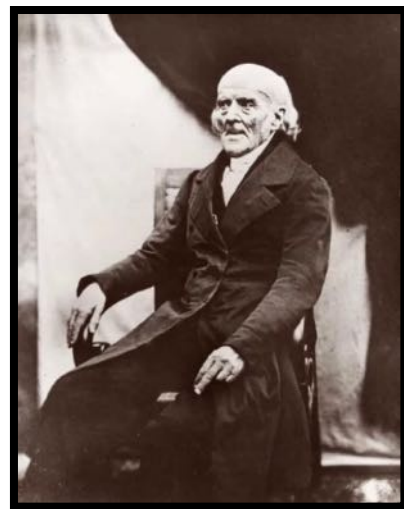
Unfortunately, it cannot be determined how those cosmic entities (energies, desperately wandering spirits, demons) are somehow effectively involved in homeopathy. It is and remains a foggy area. The key question is: what exactly happens in potentising? Potentisation or dynamisation is a method of preparation of a homeopathic medicine, in which an active substance is repeatedly and sequentially diluted which is accompanied by intensive shaking. To get an idea of what a dilution means: D10 corresponds to a drop in a swimming pool; D20 to a few drops in the North Sea. A dilution of D100 is quite normal (10 to the power of 100). Some solutions are so highly diluted that it is very unlikely that there is even a single molecule of the original active substance in such a vial. Consequently, the efficacy of such a thing can only be mental. This takes us beyond experimental physics that deals exclusively with the observable and shields itself from the occult/ invisible. But that does not prove that it is without effect. It is and remains extremely irritating to deal with a method that works but is scientifically inexplicable.

The immaterial cosmos has suffered defilement – a defilement that will be removed by the application of Christ’s blood, about which chapters 8 and 9 of Hebrews speaks in terms of the heavenly tabernacle. Its cleansing, as announced in 2 Corinthians 5:19, will open the gate. The Old Testament tabernacle has always been seen in Jewish tradition as a representation of the cosmos. Has its cleansing happened yet? No, for otherwise the Prophet Zechariah, in a depiction of the Reign of Peace, would not speak of a lying prophet. There will come a time after the so-called cleansing of the cosmos when we will be allowed to appropriate that territory. Right now, the supernatural (not the unnatural) is off limits: No entry! Cave canem, watch out for the dog!!

Only in the Great Day of Judgement, at the end of the Reign of Peace, the cosmic filth will be purged and washed away, an event we are looking forward to. This is represented by the mikveh cleansing ritual, I have written about in “The Nature of the Soul” (2nd part last section). One can read Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan’s booklet “Waters of Eden - the Mystery

of Mikveh” to get to know more about it. Published by the National Council for Synagogue Youth in 1976, it deals with renewal and rebirth. While reading, one becomes ever more astonished. This is real Jewish tradition that you can get your teeth into. Are you aware, for instance, that the God of the Old Testament identifies Himself with the baptismal water? First let me tell that mikveh means hope or expectation, and also a flowing together of water, a crowd, a company. In the Book Leviticus 11:36 we meet the mikveh: *“Nevertheless a spring or a cistern holding water shall be clean.”* Here in the Hebrew is a triple mention of the same concept (the word mikveh only once). This number is an important element. Mikveh figures in Genesis 1:10, in Exodus 7:19 and, as said, in Leviticus 11:36. Three times the Thora tells that God is the mikveh, the expectation, and three times it is about the mikveh waters. Therefore the Jew submerges himself three times in the mikveh bath. This bath is a place where (orthodox) Jewish women go for purification after a menstrual period, but it is sometimes used by men and for conversion to Judaism. God calls Himself in Jeremiah 3x the Mikveh of Israel (in 14:8, 17:13 and 50:7). Ultimately, the mikveh is a prefiguration of the cleansing of the cosmos.

That homeopathy belongs to the Biblically forbidden practice, and is not at all as innocent as we are led to believe, is shown by the experience of well-known exorcist Gabriele Amorth (1925-2016), the chief exorcist of Rome. He once conducted an experiment after being confronted by a possessed in whom he had not achieved liberation after two years of exorcism. He kept guessing about the cause of her possession. In exorcism, it is always important to find the moment and reason that opened the door to ever further possession. What transpired is that this lady had been taking homeopathic remedies for up to 20 years. Due to this experience, Amorth concluded that those cures are connected to the world of demons! He found that her demons even had names of the homeopathic remedies she used! *)



Samuel Hahnemann in 1841, shortly after the invention of the daguerreotype. Hahnemann was from 1755. John Owen from Salisbury is the earliest born human immortalised in a photograph. Born in 1735, he lived to be 107.

Extremely worryingly, Hahnemann was like his father actively involved in Freemasonry. He was a member of the lodge “Sankt Andreas zu den drei Seeblättern” (St Andrew to the three sea leaves), in Hermannstadt, Düsseldorf. Hahnemann also delved into Taoism, which is known to deal with magic. Hahnemann used a symbolic language linked to demonism! Martin Gumpert published in 1945 a translation from German: “Hahnemann: The Adventurous Career of a Medical Rebel”. It reveals that he studied and delighted in the teachings of the occult practitioner Paracelsus (1493-1541), who developed a medical theory that combined the inferior part of the Cabbala with pseudo-science. Hahnemann was also drawn to the ideas of his contemporary Franz Mesmer (1733-1815), who was a Swiss-German physician who discovered ‘animal magnetism’ (is coat of hair), later called mesmerism. Mesmer popularized an occult art, traditionally used by shamans and Satanists, as a way to control people, known today as hypnotism. In a particular setting it is used to create totally mind controlled ‘monarch slaves’. Marilyn Monroe was such a slave. It is said that Mesmer only used his hypnotic technique to heal patients, but that doesn’t give people a carte blanche to put it into practice. In his homeopathic bible from 1810, “Organon of Medicine” (Organon der rationellen Heilkunde), Hahnemann compares homeopathy with mesmerism: (1st English ed. from 1901: §293 en §294)

«« I find it yet necessary to allude here to animal magnetism, as it is defined, or rather mesmerism. (...) It is a marvelous, priceless gift from God (...) by means of which the strong will of a well-intentioned person upon a sick one [and if not well-intentioned?] by means of contact and even without this and even at some distance, can bring the vital energy of the healthy mesmerizer endowed with this power [partly endowed by demons] into another person dynamically. (...) The above mentioned methods of practicing mesmerism depend upon an influx of more or less vital force into the patient [human and partly demonic]. »»

In the same sections, Hahnemann speaks of negative mesmerism in these terms:

«« All the above mentioned methods of practising mesmerism depend upon an influx of more or less vital force into the patient, and hence are termed positive mesmerism. An opposite mode of employing mesmerism, however, as it produces just the contrary effect, deserves to be termed negative mesmerism (...) that will effect a monstrous revolution of the whole human system, termed somnambulism [mind control], wherein the human being is ravished from the world of sense and seems to belong more to the world of spirits (sic) – a highly unnatural and dangerous state [the object thus being robbed of the most precious of all, his free will]. »»

May the above serve as a warning not to engage in homeopathic practices or other kind of invisible energy healing (medicinal infrared radiation is not invisible for instruments), not because it cannot heal, but because by doing so we are treading on slippery ground where the salvation of our soul is at stake. **A healthy body at the price of our eternal salvation? This is reminiscent of Esau who traded his firstborn right for a plate of lentil soup.** For it is written in the Ancient Book of Jasher (Ch. 27): *“[The fearsome warrior] Nimrod died by the sword of Esau in shame and contempt. Terribly exhausted Esau returns home and says unto his brother Jacob: ‘Behold I shall die this day, [it’s like a deadly ailment], and wherefore then do I want the birthright?’”*

*) A persistent rumour is circulating that the COVID vaccinations were potentised and that the same will happen with each subsequent vaccination being mandated globally, with the intended effect that with each follow-up the recipient will become increasingly blind to God’s light, the light of truth, of which Christ says: “I am the way, the truth and the life”. In late 2020, the poorly tested COVID vaccines received the green light from the EMA (European Medicines Agency).

• The Return of the Jewish People to Israel

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PARTIE DES MURS DU TEMPLE :ENDROIT DES LAMENTATIONS DES JUIFS

The Return of the Jewish People to Israel — A Historical Perspective —

This is, in our time, the story of the return from galuth (exile) of the Jewish people to the land of their ancestors, which in 1948 was to become the State of Israel. On 14th May of that year, in the Tel Aviv Museum, a deeply moved Ben-Gurion proclaimed the Independence of Israel. *“Eretz Yisrael (he said) was the birthplace of the Jewish people. Here, their spiritual, religious, and political identity was shaped. Here, they first attained to statehood, created cultural values of a national and a universal significance, and gave the world the eternal book of books.”* The miracle of Israel’s existence is the manifestation of the divine intervention. In its history and revelation are one – in a very special way, unmatched in other nations. The People of Israel exists as a constant reminder of God’s intervention in world history.

This article is the story of God’s visible intervention in the wanderings of humanity, of which Israel is a token. In this connection I would like to draw your attention to the parable of the fig tree, representing God’s chosen people. The blossoming of the fig tree, in Scripture, represents the restoration of the people of Israel in the land of their ancestors. As clearly stated in Luke 21, in the time of one generation, or seventy years, all the peoples of the earth will be witnessing their deliverance when the Sign of the Son of Man appears in heaven, sign also of the Reign of Peace.

Now that we are witnessing the shaping up of the literal fulfilment of Israel’s return to their inheritance provided by God, we will be allowed to witness a return to her spiritual inheritance too. Holy Scripture has been covered for thousands of years as with a stale, impenetrable cake, which caused a number of essential truths to escape the attention of the Christians and their Jewish brethren. Yes, also of the Christians. It is the Prompter that will have to guide them in this.

3.10 – The Failure to Rebuild the Temple of Jerusalem

Let us start with the remarkable account of the fourth century failure to rebuild the Temple under the reign of Roman Emperor Julianus Apostata (361-63), which is brought to our attention in “The Church History” of Rufinus of Aquileia (ca 345-410), here given in a translation by Philip Amidon S.J. (in 10:38-40). This sensational failure of an attempted reconstruction, places what happened in our times in greater perspective.³⁸⁾

««« Now such was Julian’s refined cunning in deception that he even deluded the unhappy Jews, enticing them with the sort of vain hopes that he himself entertained [a hope that was not born out of love for the people of the Book,

38) High handed action of God’s chosen people is against the Covenant, of which a remarkable example can also be found in “The Ancient Book of Jasher” chapter 75, where it states that in the 180th year of the Israelites going down into Egypt, an army of 30,000 men of the tribe of Ephraim went to the land of Canaan in order to take possession of it. They loose in a battle in the valley of Gath, and all Ephraimites are killed except a few. This evil was from the Lord, for the men had transgressed the word of the Lord in going forth from Egypt before the appointed time by the Lord had arrived. Only after 280 years (Gen. 15:16) does the entry take place under the guidance of Joshua. See Numbers 14: 27-45 about the failed attempt to conquer the Promised Land because, also here, the appointed time had not arrived.

but out of hatred from the bottom of his heart against Christianity]. First of all, summoning them to him he asked them why they did not sacrifice when on that subject their law included commandments. Thinking an opportunity had come their way, they answered: *“We cannot do so except in the Temple in Jerusalem. For thus the law ordains.”* And having received from him permission to restore the Temple, they grew so arrogant that it was as though some prophet had come back to them. Jews came together from every corner and region and began to make their way to the Temple site, long since consumed by fire, a count having been assigned by the emperor to push forward the work, which was pursued with all earnestness and financed both publicly and privately. [Gregory of Nazianzus (ca. 327-90) reports (in Or. 5:4) that Jewish women sold their valuables to contribute to the project.] Meanwhile they insulted our people as though the time of the kingdom had returned [also making a mockery of the two basilicas raised more than half a century earlier by Constantine the Great]. They threatened them harshly and treated them cruelly; in a word, they behaved with monstrous arrogance and pride. Cyril was the bishop of Jerusalem, following Maximus the confessor. The foundations, then, having been cleared, and quicklime and stone procured, nothing more was needed before new foundations could be laid the next day once the old ones had been dislodged. The bishop, however, having carefully weighed what was contained in Daniel’s prophecy about the times on the one hand, and what the Lord had foretold in the Gospels on the other, insisted that the Jews would never be able to put a stone upon a stone there. Thus the suspense grew!

And behold, on the night which alone remained before the work was to begin, there was a violent earthquake, and not only were the stones for the foundations tossed far and wide, but almost all the buildings round about were levelled to the ground.

The public porticoes too, in which the multitude of Jews was staying who were working on the project, tumbled to the ground, burying all the Jews inside. Now there was a chamber sunk down in the interior of the Temple which had its entrance between two porticoes that had been levelled to the ground; in it were kept some iron implements and other things necessary for the work. Out of it there suddenly burst a globe of fire which sped through the square, weaving this way and that and burning and killing the Jews who were there. This happened again and again with great frequency throughout the whole day, checking the rashness of the obstinate people with the avenging flames, while meantime all who were there were in such great fear and trembling that they were forced, however very unwillingly, to abandon their plans and admit that Jesus Christ is the one true God. And so that these things would not be held to have happened by chance, on the following night the sign of the Cross appeared on everyone’s clothing so clearly that even those who in their unbelief wanted to wash it off could find no way to get rid of it. Thus the Jews and the pagans in their fright abandoned both the site and the useless project. »»»

3.11 – Allenby had the Waters of the Nile flow to Jerusalem

St Cyril of Jerusalem was no doubt also referring to Daniel 12:11 (in conjunction with Luke 21:23): *“From the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be 1290 days. Blessed is he who waits, and comes to 1335 days.”* The significance of 1290 days (read 1290 years) is not so clear, but 1335 is very remarkable, because it was in the Moslem year 1335 that the Turks were driven out of the city, that is in our year 1917, by General Edmund Allenby, who was the Commander-in-Chief of the British Egyptian Expeditionary Force. It is notable that 1917 was exactly 400 years after the Mamelukes lost their hold over Jerusalem, which

was taken by the Turks (Ottomans) without having to resort to fighting, thereby keeping the city intact,³⁹⁾ which points at Isaiah 66:8: “*Shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.*”. During the autumn of 1917 Allenby captured Gaza and Bersheeba. And on the feast of Chanukah, thus on 11th December, he quietly walked into Jerusalem, having taken the town without any bloodshed or destruction. A great miracle happened there! – Nes Gadol Haya Sham. A popular Chanukah game is spinning the dreidel, a four-sided cylindrical figure that spins like a top. On each side, a Hebrew letter is written: Nun, Gimmel, Hay, Shin, which makes the acronym: “Nes Gadol Haya Sham” (a great miracle happened there).



The picture above is of the First Australian Flying Corps flying over Palestine, taken by famous war photographer Frank Hurley (1885-1962). In 1917 Hurley became the first official photographer to the Australian Imperial Forces. When he arrived at the Western Front his rank was honorary captain, but the troops, seeing how he took risks to get his pictures, dubbed him “*the mad photographer*”.

In their boast that the sword of Islam should hold sway over the land, the Turks liked to boast: “When the water of the Nile flows into Palestine, then will a prophet of the Lord come and drive us out of the land”, meaning ‘never’. Indeed, Allenby had the water of the Nile flow to Jerusalem via a pipeline to provide for his troops. Not only so, but the leader who drove the Turks out, was known in Arabic throughout Palestine as “Allah-en-Nebi”, which sounds the same as Allenby, and means prophet of God. Another interesting detail is that 9th December, the day that the surrender was formally accepted by Major General O’Shea on behalf of Allenby, that this fell on the 24th of the Jewish month Kislev, just before Chanukah, that accordingly started on the evening of the 9th December.

39) The connection taken from Daniel’s prophecy between Moslem year 1335 and Anno Domini 1917 was first published by a certain H. Grattan Guinness and spouse in a book published in 1886: “Light for the Last days: a study in chronological prophecy” (p. 253 - 1917 ed.). After 1917 this was further elaborated by a Royal Air Force mechanic called J. M. Stears.

All through the previous night the Turkish troops had been evacuating the Holy City. At dawn on the ninth they had all gone. They had planned to put the town and its conquered inhabitants under heavy mortar fire, which, however, they were unable to do because of a new tactical weapon of the English: the plane! (Is. 31:5) This came to them as a complete surprise. So it happened that on the morning of the ninth, in the early and peaceful hours, the mayor of the town and a small party, under the protection of a white flag, were seen coming to surrender the keys of the city to the British commander.

The spiritual dimension is more important than the material one

The 24th of Kislev also takes on special significance in the light of the book of Haggai. The prophet reproved the people, who by God's grace had been brought back from their 70 years' captivity, that they had forsaken their duty to restore His House. They closed their eyes to the spiritual dimension of their life, which is a lesson also to be learned by the present leadership in the modern State of Israel. In Haggai's time, in the 5th century BC, they were building fine houses for themselves and neglecting the ruined Temple, which explained their miserable state and misfortunes. They decided to heed his voice, and as a result a second message, one of blessing, was brought to them on the 24th of Kislev, a date which is twice considered and twice mentioned in just a few verses (2:18-20). This presentation of facts draws our attention to the fact that this date was something special, even at that time, and had some bearing on the Temple.

3.12 – The Vital Necessity of a National Home

If the Moslem year 1335 (Daniel 12:11) equals our year 1917, when the deliverance of Jerusalem took place, then it follows that the Moslem year 1290, mentioned in the first part of Daniel's prophecy, is our year 1873, that falls 33 years after the key-year 1840. It should be mentioned that 33 solar years - minus 4.5 days - equal 34 Moslem years, the latter being based on a shorter year cycle of twelve lunar months.



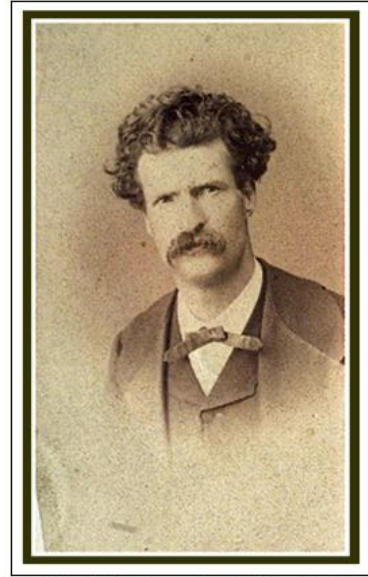
General Allenby entering the Holy City of Jerusalem in 1917 (middle and right)

What happened in 1873? This was a year characterised by strong emotions as measured by the stock market crashes in various countries and the concomitant onset of economic depression, only to be surpassed by the great depression of 1929. In Germany, the public held the liberal capitalists and Jewish bankers and entrepreneurs responsible for it, in what is known as 'der Gründerschwindel' (capital swindle or founders' scam), an absurd accusation because Jews were proscribed from owning lands. An argument can be made that this year marks the very beginnings of a structured twofold movement: a religiously motivated Zionism with its anti-pole of secular Zionism. In fact, both were driven by the antisemitism of the day. Religious Zionism was not new, but the latter kind of Zionism was almost unheard of before, and though insignificant in 1873, it was to become the leading force.



As early as 1870 the religiously motivated Zionism had its agricultural school in Palestine: the Mikveh Israel (Hope of Israel), founded on the sole initiative of Zvi Hirsch Kalischer. Kalischer was the anti-pole of Moses Hess, whose proposed Jewish nation was to be a Marxist paradise. Hess invented “*religion is the opium of the people*”, the slogan that found its way into the 1848 Communist Manifesto. A year to remember is 1862, when both, unaware of each other’s existence, published exhortations for the need of a homeland. In 1864 Kalischer organized the “Central Committee for Settlement in Eretz-Israel” in Berlin. At that stage it was more of a symbolic gesture, but nonetheless a beginning. He advocated, against much rabbinical opposition in both Europe and Palestine, that the redemption of Zion would have to begin with action on the part of the Jewish people and then, step by step, the messianic miracle would follow suit. The old kind of antisemitism will have contributed to the desire of the religious Jew to come back ‘Home’, but it was foremost a religious conviction he entertained that vibrated on the same emotional plane as his longing for the return of the Messiah, and in the past both expectations had always been projected into some distant future.

Another precursor of Zionism was Moses Montefiore (1784-1885). He was moved by the dismal conditions of his fellow men in Poland, Russia, Rumania and Damascus; he tirelessly fought to alleviate their plight in the places where they were staying. But he had higher ideals. Between 1827 and 1875 he made seven journeys to Palestine and he is credited with the start of 'Jerusalem - New Town' in 1855, planned to harbour the Jews who were living in overcrowded and ghastly unsanitary quarters within the walled confines of the Old Town. They then numbered 15,500 souls. Cesar Famin called them *"the constant objects of Mussulman oppression and intolerance, insulted by the Greeks, persecuted by the Latins, and living only on the scanty alms transmitted by their European brethren"*. Still and all they constituted a good half of its population, being far in excess of the sedentary Moslems. The countryside at this juncture offered a picture of gloom and doom.



Mark Twain – 1867 (Turkije)

Chanukah is the joyous festival that dates from the Maccabean period, commemorating the restoration of the Temple to a state of ritual purity, an event that happened in 164 BC. The restoration had become a religious necessity because of the awful desecration by the despot Antiochus Epiphanes. (1 Macc. 4)

In 1867 Mark Twain visited Palestine, described in his famed travel book "The Innocents Abroad":

«« We took another swim in the Sea of Galilee at twilight yesterday, and another at sunrise this morning. (...) In the early morning we mounted and started. (...) We jogged along peacefully over the great caravan route from Damascus to Jerusalem and Egypt, past Lubia and other Syrian hamlets, perched, in the unvarying style, upon the summit of steep mounds and hills, and fenced round about with giant cactuses, the sign of worthless land, with prickly pears upon them like hams, and came at last to the battle-field of Hattin, where the knightly Crusaders fought their last fight, and in a blaze of glory passed from the stage and ended their splendid career forever. (...) It was hard to realize that this silent plain had once resounded with martial music and trembled to the tramp of armed men. A desolation is here that not even imagination can grace with the pomp of life and action. We reached Tabor safely. (...) We never saw a human being on the whole route. »» (hfst. 49)

In 1882, Ottoman census figures show that in the entire Palestinian region at the West of the river Jordan, there were only 141,000 Muslims, both Arab and non-Arab. As the Jews arrived in the next fifty years, the Arabs followed too. They came from abroad for the jobs and prosperity that the Jews had created there. And, they came in big numbers.

The 'Jerusalem New Town' venture was regarded by Montefiore – but not by his co-religionists – as the first step towards the colonisation of Palestine. Because of the constant harassment from Moslem citizens and the Bedouin bandits, who roamed the plains, 'Jerusalem New Town' only became a permanent settlement in 1869. These various developments remained hesitant and it is certainly true that without the Russian Pogroms, starting in 1881, and the Nazi persecution much later, many would not have

been convinced of the vital necessity of a National Home, and this includes the adherents of both forms of Zionism.

The repeated warnings, by word and in writing, by the prophetic figure Rabbi Judah Hai Alkalai (1798-1878) that misfortune would befall his people if they did not prepare for a return to the ancient Homeland, had vanished into thin air. Supporting his ideas and arguments with ample quotations from Jewish religious literature, Alkalai asserted that the final supernatural redemption to be brought about by the Messiah must be preceded by the physical return of the Jews to Zion, and ...that now in 1840 and finally, after 1,700 years wanderings, the time had come! Indeed, then and since then misfortune befell his people. Precisely in 1840, the Damascus Affair broke out with an ugly blood libel that upset the whole Jewish commonwealth. It was in 1882, following the first Pogroms in Russia, that the idea of re-establishment was again put into writing by the physician Leon Pinsker from Odessa in his famous pamphlet "Auto-Emancipation". He sounded his call in the words of Rabbi Hillel: "*If I am not for myself, who will be for me?*", and continued:

«« The Jews must emancipate themselves. We must re-establish ourselves as a living nation. For long the Jews have lacked the desire to become a nation as a sick man lacks appetite, but the desire must be created. Without it they will remain a ghost people, ghosts of a dead nation walking alive among the living. The Jew is the eternal foreigner. Other foreigners always have a country somewhere that claims their patriotism. Only the Jews have not, and without it they remain aliens everywhere. What a contemptible role for a people that once had its Maccabeans! There is no use complaining of antisemitism; it will go on as long as the Jew remains a ghost and an alien. There is something unnatural about a people without a territory just as there is about a man without a shadow. »»

3.13 – Persecution gave Critical Momentum to the Return Home

The antisemitism new style drove many Jewish people to the land of Israel. The Bible talks about fishers and hunters who would 'fish' and 'hunt' the Jews back home. The fishermen are the Zionists, who want to fish the Jews to Israel, the hunters are the antisemites and anti-Zionists, who make life like hell for the Jewish people and cause them to get away. The prophecy about the fishers and hunters goes: "*I, the Lord, will bring the children of Israel again into their land that I gave unto their fathers. Behold, I will send for many fishers, and they shall fish them; and I will send for many hunters.*" (Jer. 16:15-16)

In Cecil Roth's book "A Short History of the Jewish People" the inception of modern antisemitism is traced back to 1873, the year of the financial débâcle for which the Jews were held responsible. In that year the groundwork for the antisemitism new style was laid by the influential political thinker Heinrich von Treitschke, who coined the phrase spread again and again by the news media: "*Die Juden sind unser Unglück*" (the Jews are our misfortune). Karl Eugen Dühring joined in, the man who engaged in a well-known polemic with Karl Marx, whose ideas he categorically denounced. He stated that the Jewish problem is just a racial problem and that the Jews are a race not only strange to Germany, but irremediably and ontologically bad. In his tracks followed the philosopher Eduard von Hartmann. Finally this resulted in organising the first Anti-Jewish Congress in 1882 in Dresden, where they accepted the "*Manifesto to the Governments and Peoples of the Christian Nations Threatened by Judaism*".

The official start of Zionism was in 1897 with the First Zionist Congress on August 29th at Basel, convened by the insistent and unceasing efforts of Theodor Herzl, whose adage was: "*Wenn Ihr wollt, ist es kein Märchen*", or: If you will it, it's no legend. In his Sept.

3rd diary entry he makes the famous statement: "*In Basel I founded the Jewish State*". After reporting the 1894 Dreyfus Affair as a journalist, Herzl took up the call by Pinsker⁴⁰⁾ and turned to Zionism as the solution to the growing hatred against his kin. This infamous affair concerned a French artillery captain who, because of his Jewish affiliation, was falsely charged with delivering defence secrets to the Germans. At the humiliation ceremony of Dreyfus, the spectators cried out: "*Death to Dreyfus and death to the Jews*". As a witness, this particularly struck Herzl, and this he was never to forget.

Antisemitism is a modern term that conveys the impression that only the Jews are Semites, but other peoples are part of the Semitic stock, like the Arabs. The word anti-Semite was introduced by Wilhelm Marr to replace the German 'Judenhass' (Jew-hatred) with a term that would sound less vulgar. Although the word anti-Semite is etymologically incorrect, everyone understands what is meant by it. Before 1873 anti-semitism focused on Jewish concepts of God. Modern antisemitism focuses on the Jews' peoplehood and nationhood. In fact, quite a few Jew-haters today even deny that they are antisemites, claiming that they are anti-Zionists. I now quote from Cecil Roth's book "A Short History of the Jewish People": (ch. 29)

«« The anti-Semites – as they were named in 1879 by Wilhelm Marr, a highly jaundiced pamphleteer – insisted not only that the 'race' to which the Jews belonged was distinct, but also that it was inferior - which, in view of Jewish eminence in art, literature, science, business, politics, and general life, was demonstrably absurd. Overlooking the fact that most of the important nations of the Western World were comparative newcomers, and that the Jews had been established there for two thousand years, they purported to regard the latter as alien excrescences upon European life. They were scientifically distinguishable, it was asserted, by a lower cranial capacity; and they were inferior physically, intellectually, and morally to their fellow-citizens of the Aryan, and more specifically of the Teutonic or Nordic stock, 'the fairest blossom on the human tree'. Their religion was not false in the old sense, but it was the expression of a lower moral conception, and thus inculcated a perverted moral sense. The Talmud was again attacked, with a resuscitation of all the medieval exaggerations, suppressions and perversions; but this time on ostensibly ethical, rather than theological grounds. The Jews were held to be responsible for every trouble or misfortune that befell the nations where they lived. If they had made their way to the fore in the business world, it had been only because of their unscrupulous methods. Their importance in contemporary life was regarded as the outcome of an organised and brutal attempt to secure domination. »»

It was, again, persecution that gave critical momentum to the movement, now forty years old. I mean 1933. In a perverted scheme hatched between the Third Reich and Jewish Palestine many Jews came to settle in Palestine in the 1930s. They established the strong foundations of modern Israel, which until then had not occurred in such a way in terms of people, organisation, reclamation of fields and the settlement of towns. Edwin Black comments on this episode on the back flap of his book "The Transfer Agreement" (Brookline Books, USA # 1999):

40) "Herzl took up the call by Pinsker" is meant in the spiritual sense. After the Dreyfus trial, in his own words a "curious excitement" began to seize Herzl. Ideas raced through his mind, tumbled out upon scraps of paper wherever he was, "walking, standing, lying down, in the street, at table, in the night... more than once I was afraid I was going out of my mind", he wrote in his diary. In five days he wrote a 65-page pamphlet, that in a revised version was published in Vienna as "Judenstaat". This tract can be seen as the logical follow-up of Pinsker's pamphlet. Astonishingly, however, he had never read Pinsker. Herzl confessed later that if he had read Pinsker's "Auto-Emancipation" first, he would never have written his own pamphlet.

«« The Transfer Agreement is the stunning, compassionate account of the ‘deal with the devil’ that saved 60,000 Jews from the Holocaust. The deal was made in desperation in 1933 between the Jewish leadership in Palestine and the Third Reich. The terms: that the Jewish-led boycott of German goods would cease in return for the transfer of German Jews to the Holy Land. Eventually one-tenth of Germany’s Jews were saved, thus helping to form the seedbed of modern Israel.

(And he writes on page 379-80:) After World War II, when hundreds of thousands of Jews from a dozen different nations wandered through Europe, stateless and displaced, each Jew a remnant of a family, a town or a ghetto, all ravaged survivors without homes and without lives to return to, after the Holocaust, when the moment of the ingathering of the exiles was at hand, Israel was ready. A nation was waiting.

Fifteen years earlier, it hadn’t existed. Fifteen years earlier few could have visualized what was to come, what was to be. But a small group of men did. They foresaw it all. That’s why nothing would stop them; no force was too great to overcome. These men were the creators of Israel. And in order to do so, each had to touch his hand to the most controversial undertaking in Jewish history – the Transfer Agreement. It made a state. Was it madness, or was it genius? »»

Was it madness? No, but the way in which it was executed was a shame and a disgrace. As Rabbi Chaim Simons comments in his 2007 essay, “The Secular Zionist Agenda for a Jewish State”:

«« Eretz Yisrael [land of Israel] was Divinely given to the Jewish people and every Jew has an equal right to live there. However, (...) the secular Zionists thought otherwise. (...) At the Eigtheenths Zionist Congress held in Prague in August 1933, Ben-Gurion said: “***Eretz Yisrael today needs not ordinary immigrants, but pioneers. The difference between them is simple – an immigrant comes to take from the land, whereas a pioneer comes to give to the land. Therefore, we demand priority for Aliyah to pioneers.*** [The immigration of Jews from the diaspora]” [Emphasis in the minutes.]

The question here is how would Ben-Gurion define an ‘ordinary immigrant’ and how a ‘pioneer’? From his speech, it is obvious that a person working the land on a kibbutz is a pioneer. However, it would almost certainly appear that an old person coming to spend his last years in the Holy Land, or even a Yeshiva student [who studies religion], would be classed as a mere ‘ordinary immigrant’!

It was a few years later at the Twentieth Zionist Congress held in Zurich in August 1937, that Weizmann spelled out more specifically what was meant by ‘selective Aliyah’: “*I told the members of the Royal [Peel] Commission that six million Jews want to go on Aliyah. One of the members asked me: Do you think you could bring all of them to Eretz Yisrael? On this I answered (...) that two million young people (...) we want to save. The old people will pass. They will bear their fate or they will not. They have already become like dust, economic and moral dust in this cruel world.*”

(...) The secular Zionists were not even ashamed to put out a memorandum in which they quite openly had a section under the heading: “*Who to save*”. (...) Although it came out under the name of Apolinary Hartglas, it has been suggested that in fact it was Yitzchak Gruenbaum who actually wrote it. Under this section it was written: “*To my sorrow we have to say that if we are able to save only ten thousand people and we need to save fifty thousand [coming from the selection] should be of use in building up the land and the revival of the nation. (...) First and foremost one must rescue children since they are the best material for the Yishuv. One must rescue the pioneering youth, especially those who have had training and are idealistically qualified for Zionist work. One should rescue the Zionist functionaries since they deserve something from the Zionist movement for*

their work. (...) Pure philanthropic rescue, for example, saving the Jews of Germany, if carried out in an indiscriminate manner, could from a Zionist prospective only cause harm."

As can be seen, just as with both Weizmann and Montor, Hartglas was not interested in old people wanting to come to Eretz Yisrael. Even amongst the younger generation, he was only interested in those who would work the land – Yeshivah students were of no use to him. Further exclusions to Aliyah by the secular Zionists were people who did not belong to the Zionist camp (that consisted of Communists). Some Jews, who succeeded in arriving in Eretz Yisrael in the second half of 1944, gave evidence on this question. Pinchas Gross, who had been a public worker of the Rumanian 'Agudat Yisrael' [political party representing the Orthodox Jews] stated: *"The first principle of the Zionist Aliyah Committee in Bucharest was not to allow members of Agudat Yisrael to go on Aliyah. This was despite the agreement which had been made before the war between Agudat Yisrael and the Jewish Agency on the Aliyah quotas for members of Agudat Yisrael. (...) Shlichim from the Aliyah Committee in Bucharest arrived in Transylvania with large sums of money in order to transfer hundreds of pioneers to Bucharest for the purpose of Aliyah. We also asked for our members the possibility of Aliyah, but were rudely rejected."* (...) In a letter to the Israeli daily newspaper Ha'aretz in 1983, the historian Professor Yigal Eilam confirmed: *"The Zionists did very little in the saving of Jews, not because they were unable to do more, but because they were concentrating on the Zionist enterprise."* In a similar vein, in an article by the historian Dina Porat, which appeared in Ha'aretz in 1991, she wrote: *"From the moment that the State became the primary objective, the life of a Jew became secondary in accordance with the principle 'the State of Israel is above everything'."*

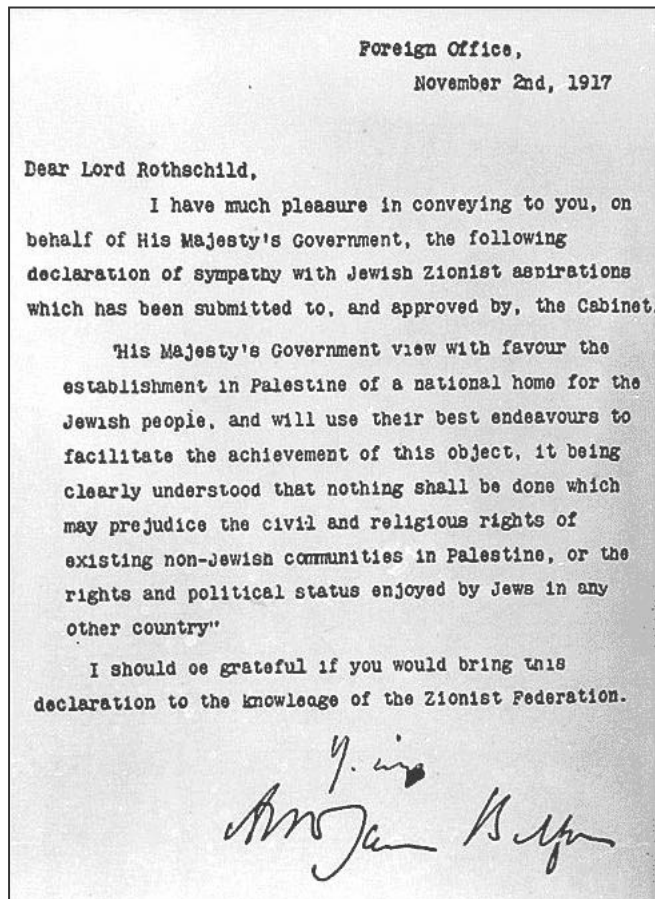
Unlike Ben-Gurion, who put Zionism first and Jewish lives just in second place, the Rabbis of the period immediately put "Pikuach Nefesh" [the saving of lives] first. (...) The Jews living in Eretz Yisrael were demanding the diverting of (some of the) Keren Hayesod money [Palestine Foundation Fund] to rescue efforts, even though this meant that less money would arrive in Eretz Yisrael and could accordingly affect their living standards. In contrast Gruenbaum commented: *"Zionism is above everything"*, even though this meant not rescuing European Jewry from the Holocaust. »»

3.14 – A new State is Born

In April 1920, in the small Italian town of San Remo, Britain and France divided the Middle East into mandates while the American ambassador read his newspaper in the garden. Britain obtained Palestine, Transjordan and Iraq. The French acquired Syria. Part of the English Mandate, ratified by the principal Allied Powers, and thus gaining the status of an international treaty, contained the Balfour Declaration, so named after British Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour, that announced the support for the Jewish people for the establishment of a national home in Palestine without prejudice to the rights of the non-Jewish settlements. This presentation of facts gives the impression that the formation of Israel was the self-evident consequence of England's withdrawal from Palestine in 1948, but such was not the case. It was an act of courage when in that year Ben Gurion, who was to become the first Prime Minister of the new State of Israel, announced the birth of the nation.

When, during the course of 1917, the Balfour Declaration was drafted, there was quite some opposition from Jewish circles in Britain, in particular by Edwin Montagu, who from his post in the War Cabinet, did not stop the Declaration altogether, but at least so managed to blur its wording as to leave unclear what its drafters had in mind. In those

days the high society Jews still regarded Zionism as a mad delusion of “*an army of beggars and cranks*”. A re-created homeland seemed to them, not the fulfilment of a dream, but the undermining of their hard-won citizenship in Western countries. There were some notable exceptions, like ‘Natty’, a good acquaintance of Balfour, in full the first Lord Nathan Rothschild who not so incidentally was the grandson of the brother-in-law and business partner of Moses Montefiore (the other Rothschilds were assimilationists). And there was of course Herbert Samuel who was to become the first High Commissioner for Palestine; he was also the first Jew ever to sit in an English government, in the Asquith cabinet.⁴¹⁾



41) There were persistent rumours, denied by Samuel himself, that the initiative for what was to become the Balfour Declaration came from him. These rumours were based on a memorandum he wrote on the issue in 1915, which Herbert Asquith found quite distasteful. The Balfour Declaration was not an easy thing. It was the result of a confluence of developments. It was Chaim Weizmann, the future president of Israel, who attracted Balfour's interest to the exigency of the cause during a momentous discussion they had in 1906. Lloyd George, of course, was also an important factor in the development of the scheme. Already in the Asquith cabinet he had been a staunch supporter of Samuel's memorandum with which he was involved from the beginning. The memo was called "The Future of Palestine", and it outlined the prospects of an independent Jewish State that could harbour three to four million European Jews. Only after Lloyd George headed the War Cabinet in December 1916, after having ousted Asquith, and in which Balfour became Foreign Secretary, the government began to seriously consider a public statement of policy on Palestine and opened official talks with the interested parties.

My father's mother was Belgian. Her mother's mother was Jewish and related to Lord Samuel. Lord Samuel's son called my father 'nephew', but only once my father had become Minister of Foreign Affairs!

The controversy at the time of drafting facilitated the repudiation of the Declaration in May 1939 by the so-called White Paper. By then the reaction of the Jewish community was different. Reacting immediately, the Jewish Agency, which was the political body that represented the Jews vis-a-vis the Mandate government, declared that the White Paper was a denial by the British government of the right of the Jewish people to rebuild their National Home in their ancestral country, a breach of faith, a surrender to Arab nationalism. During the war the saying went: *"We will fight the White Paper as if there is no war and we will fight the war as if there is no White Paper"*. Winston Churchill, who returned to the scene in December 1939, had to deal with the political constellation of the time and although not unsympathetic to the Jewish cause, he could do little to redress the violation of the pledge. He was one of the first to cordially congratulate Chaim Weizmann on the foundation of the New State, asserting *"what a fine moment it is for an old Zionist like me!"* In Appendix 6 is a summary of Churchill's Testimony before the Peel Commission, which clearly and unmistakably shows his support for the Jewish right of settlement in Palestine.

This stood in sharp contrast to the approach of the British government in general, particularly so after Churchill's dismissal as head of government after the war. The Peel Commission, who had studied the Jewish problem, advised to partition the land of Palestine between Arabs and Jews. This principle, not the proposal itself, was voted for by the United Nations, a mere five months before the birth of the new State (33 votes in favor, 13 against and 10 abstentions). However, England's elite, amongst whom Jews, did not feel obliged to hand over the Mandate in an orderly fashion. Covertly they continued to obstruct the plan. No means was left untouched to prevent a peaceful co-existence between Jew and Arab. They sowed winds of hate, and storms were reaped. People kind to Britannia have commented that it was to safeguard the interests of their Empire and though there is some truth in it, without a vicious antisemitism they could and would have acted differently.

3.15 – 1840 marks the Dawn of the Messianic Age

How did it come about, one might ask, that the Balfour Declaration was initially met with Jewish incomprehension and refusal? Because it fitted with the 'Christian Vision' of the Restoration of the Jewish people in the Holy Land. Its solemn vow can nonetheless be situated in 1840. Coincidentally the same year, Jewish year 5600, earmarked the preparation for the 'candle lighting' of the Messianic Age, according to Rabbi Judah Hai Alkalai. In his view this meant that at that particular year of the 'galuth' (exile), the land of Israel had become the Promised Land again. He was right, but it also meant that the prophecy of Isaiah 29:18 was being fulfilled: *"In that day the deaf shall hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness"*, which annulled the prophecy of verse 10, taken up by Paul in his letter to the Romans (11:8): *"God has poured on them a spirit of deep sleep, eyes that they should not see and ears that they should not hear, to this very day."* How marvellous are the ways of the Lord, for on August 17th 1840, under the impetus of Lord Ashley (later to become Lord Shaftesbury), a public debate started *"to plant the Jewish people in the land of their fathers which [it was stated also] became a serious political consideration"*. Ashley was moved by a religious fervour of the purest kind; let it be understood, the fervour and zeal of an Anglican Christian who took the Biblical truths as eternal truths. He believed the time had come for the Restoration of God's ancient people as he used to call them. He stood by no means alone.

Remarkably, the Restoration also meant, in his view and that of a number of important persons, a mass conversion of the Jews to the Christian faith, also to be brought about by missionary work. The most important of all gospel societies was the "London Society

for Promoting Christianity among the Jews” (now the Church’s Ministry Among the Jewish People or CMJ). Commonly called the Jews’ Society, it was founded in 1809, for which the idea came up maybe in 1807, or in 1840 minus 33 years. It was under the patronage of no less a person than the Duke of Kent, brother of the King and the father of Queen Victoria. The endeavours in that direction failed as from start, except for a few isolated cases. In the long run more results could be felt, when translations of the New Testament into Hebrew, Yiddish and Ladino were made available. One seems to agree, based a lecture delivered in November 1977 by Louis Goldberg, on a number of approximately a quarter of a million converts in Europe in the late 19th and early 20th century. Whatever happened on that front, at the time of the Balfour Declaration, the vision to bring back God’s people ‘home’ had become solidly fixed in the British mind.

This is the *raison d’être* of the Balfour Declaration. It was the doing of England against opposition of all sorts, also from the Roman Catholic Church, which was only too happy with her position of the chosen one ‘instead of Israel’ and did not see why that would have to change now...

3.16 – The Church instead of Israel?

It is not only a question whether Jesus Christ, the ‘Son of God’, is the Messiah promised to the Jews, but it is also about the meaning of ‘New Covenant’. Was this made with the Christian church rather than with Israel? Christian theology, and Roman Catholic theology in particular, has always insisted that the Church has replaced Israel. It should actually never have been the subject of discussion since Hebrews 8:8, based on Jeremiah 31:31, very clearly states that the partners to the covenant are the same in both cases, namely God and the houses of Israel and Judah: *“For if that first covenant had been faultless then no place would have been sought for a second. Because finding fault with them, He says in Jeremiah: ‘Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.’”*

The position of the Christian church vis-à-vis Israel has never been adequately resolved. In the previous two thousand years, it appears that we should have distinguished more carefully between both the church ‘as head’ and the church ‘of the larger community’, something that the Apostle Paul writes extensively about. Together they form the body of all who accept their calling to grace, in order to become, according to the first letter of Peter, a royal priesthood. This distinction is necessary because both priests and faithful partake in different ways and organically in the one priesthood of Jesus Christ. According to Romans 9, the people who do not want to accept their calling are known as the children of the flesh; those who do, as the children of the promise. See also Maria Valtorta’s impressive treatise on Romans 9. In her discussion under ‘Lesson 38’ she explain:

«« Those who want to be Christians, and truly so, should hold the same affection for their separated brothers as Paul held for the Jews, his separated brothers [to the flesh]. [The other] elected sons, each of a kind are the ones who believe in Christ [the Protestants] but are not part of the mystic body, because they are not linked to the mystic grape tree that is the Church of Rome; the others are those who are part of the Church of Rome, but are dead members. They have received baptism and other sacraments of the true Church, but since then have fallen in the practice of deadly sins or sinful habits because of the workings of evil will, or they were struck with ecclesiastical condemnations having succumbed to all kinds of heresies: superstition, idolatry, even with regard to man, community with the devil, membership of anti-Christian sects, spiritism, magic and various other alienations. »»

The church of the anointed priests is a smaller group – and forms the head – since the group of priests is always smaller than the group of people, the body. To them, the head, has been given the ministry of reconciliation to the benefit of the people (2 Cor. 5:18-20), which includes both the children of the promise and the children of the flesh. That is to say, that reconciliation is meant for the benefit of Israel and all Christian baptized ones who have sometimes, even seriously, renounced their calling.

As concerns the New Covenant in Christ's blood: After Jeremiah 31:29 it says that a new covenant will be made, not according to the covenant which they broke when they danced before the golden calf and that was renewed at the subsequent Yom Kippur (Great Day of Atonement). There will be a different kind of renewal of the covenant that, according to verse 33, will be like a law written on everyone's heart. But that has not materialized in our time, not even among Christians! In the coming days, so it continues, nobody shall have to confront another with: *"Learn how to know Jahwe"*. Jeremiah 31:33 reads in full: *"This is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord. I will put my laws within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."* This refers to the prophecy of his contemporary Ezekiel: *"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh."* (Ez. 36:26)

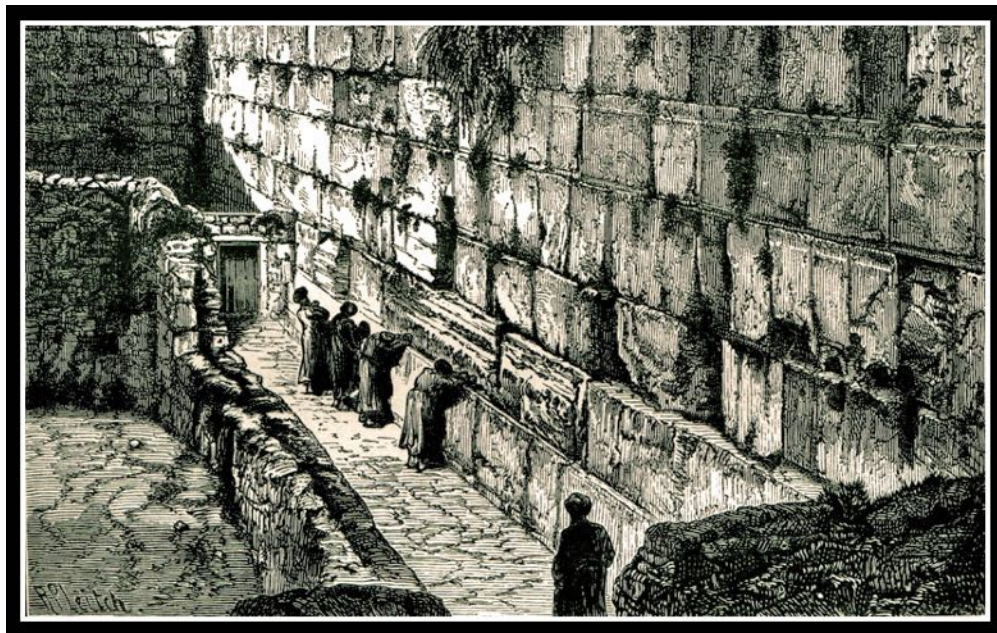
A new covenant... and yet from the quote of Hebrews 8:8 it is clear that the old covenant has never been replaced. So if there is no replacement, how can we solve the controversy between Jeremiah 31:32 and Hebrews 8:13 in which the old covenant is declared to have become obsolescent? The solution can be found in the special construction of the Sinai covenant. The Sinaitic code can be divided into four parts: the ordinances, the legal judgments, the spiritual leadership and the regulations. (Deut. 6:20) The ordinances consist of the laws related to each phase of man's labours in the fields of religion, morals, social relationships, economics and politics. The legal judgments refer to actions in exceptional cases: the precedents. The spiritual leadership should, according to Leviticus 10:10, distinguish between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean. This is sometimes known as the Tenth Commandment and this still fully applies in orthodox Judaism. Christianity has already distanced itself as from the very beginning of the Old Testament rules, which centered around the argument 'circumcision or not'.

And then there are the regulations. They deal with liturgical questions – the construction and furnishing of the tabernacle, the robes and functions of the priestly caste, the feasts, the fasts and the various services of sacrifice. One can hardly continue to insist that the Christian dispensation has replaced the ordinances and the legal judgments, except for the fact that they are less stringent when applied to the goyim (the non-Jews). The regulations are another matter: in Christ's sacrifice on the Cross they have found their final destination, of which they were the advance image. And the sacrifice on the Cross has found its expression in the sacrifice of the Holy Mass. In this sense we can speak of obsolescence. Here it is clearly a question of an intervention, even more: an incision – if only it were the transfer of the priesthood from the tribe of Levi to that of Judah, since the new High Priest Jesus is of the house of Judah. These two aspects are 'renewed'. And yet we must keep in mind the fact that in this whole concept the old Sinaitic covenant retains its significance, inclusive the liturgical festive calendar and its customs. If someone gets an important promotion – in this case Israel, it can happen that his employment contract is revised and a whole new package is signed, while most of the conditions of the original contract are largely retained.

It is important to consider that during Holy Mass the priest does not represent Christ, but that Christ works through him, essential distinction. Consequently, the Mass remains the one and only sacrifice that once took place on Golgotha. Therefore, the Holy Mass is

truly sacrificial and truly reconciliatory. The priestly church in Christ, of whom we know that He is a descendant of David of the tribe of Judah, is in Christ the replacement of the Levitical high priestly caste. The church of the general body of faithful, which, as we have just established, differs from the priestly church (the head), can be regarded as the addition of a new scion to the people of Israel (the 12 tribes). In its high-priestly function, the Christian Church partakes 'in' Christ in one of the tribes of Israel.

If there is question about a doctrine of replacement, then it applies to the priestly service of reconciliation where one tribe of Israel, Judah (the actual Jews), has taken over the office of the other, named Levi, with its prerogatives too (Is. 61:1-9). For the rest it appears that, as long as the Israel of the 12 tribes is not grafted back onto the noble olive tree, the Christian Church exists 'instead of' Israel, which also applies to doctrinal matters, the prophetic office and the kingship. It is in the manner of the second in line who in an interim function replaces the prime minister when for some reason the latter is incapacitated. Says the Apostle: *"The mystery of God reveals that the Israelites remain the beloved according to the election. For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. Why then this mystery is revealed to us? So that we, the Christian Church, would not brag and scoff."* (Rom. 11:18-29) Finally it will become one pastor and one flock. Our unfaithfulness can never annul God's faithfulness, even if both have failed, those who are far away and those who should have been near. In this connection I am reminded of what the Dutch pastor Reverend A.A. Leenhouts wrote, as long ago as in 1971: *"The (great) ecumenical movement stands diametrically opposed to God's plan with Israel, both through its false structure of synthesis and its striving for unity that is completely divorced from our gentile-Christian assignment for the re-establishment of Israel as a Kingdom of Priests. There will be one flock and one Shepherd - inclusive Israel."*⁴²⁾



3.17 – Peace is the one thing that lacks...

As discussed, in 1917 Britain did not annex Palestine, but administered it afterwards under the mandate from the League of Nations. Then, in 1947, notice was given that she would abandon the mandate, to be brought into effect the year following, the year also

⁴²⁾ "Mijn Wraak is Barmhartig" (My Vengeance is Sweet) – Stichting Getuigenis en Eenheid # 1971 (p. 29).

of the establishment of the State of Israel, which however would have a divided Jerusalem of which one part belonged to Israel. Now it happened in 1967, under a completely different setting than fifty years earlier, that the Temple Mount was taken during the Six Day War, being a fulfilment of the prophecy of Luke 21:23: *"Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled."* First by the Romans, then the Moslems, then the British and finally it was subdued by the Jordanians.

Since that fateful date in June 1967, peace is the one thing that lacks, not least because of Israel's autocratic rule in the annexed regions. They had to pay a heavy toll in the 1973 Yom Kippur war, when ten thousand of the flower of the nation had to give their lives, which has to be added to the three thousand deaths during previous confrontations. This was quite different from the 769 deaths during the Six Day War. The chain of events is eloquently exposed in Bernard Avishai's book from 1985: *"The Tragedy of Zionism"*. It is not insignificant that the Arab Intifada (uprising) began on 9th December 1987, the one generation anniversary of the British deliverance of Jerusalem from the Turks, thus after 70 years, as well as 40 years after the end of the Mandate.

Until the establishment of the State of Israel, the Jews living in the Arab states were tolerated, albeit much discriminated against. During the war, Hitler wanted to know the number of Jews living in Morocco, then about 255,000, upon which the king replied: *"We only have Moroccans, no Jews in this country."* Yet after the establishment of the State of Israel, they had to leave Morocco after which 13,000 were left behind. Their protection had finished. How to explain this drastic change, which exemplifies the general attitude in the Arab world? The orientalist professor Hans Jansen analyzed the problem magisterially in an interview that appeared in the Dutch newspaper *"Trouw"* on Dec. 16th 2006. The following analysis he made explains the full-blooded reaction of the Arab countries and their refusal to grant Israel's right to existence:

«« The realisation of the Zionist project, regarded as utopian by the majority of Jews in Europe before the Second World War, enabled the Jews in the whole of the Middle East to leave well behind them their 'dhimmi-status' – as legally protected but second-class citizens – and to assert their independence. The Arab Moslems, a proud people always wanting to dominate, were deeply shocked at this development, simply and solely because of the fact that the protected minority of Jews in the Middle East refused to accept any longer their status under the patronising, semi-considerate, semi-tolerant attitude of their masters. The Moslems accused the Jews of no longer being prepared to know their place within the Islamic world. The unexpected metamorphosis from the contemptible, powerless, humiliated and subjected Jew into a Zionist who gained military victories and was thus seen as a threat to Moslem society caused a theological, sociological, economic and political break with the ages-old tradition of Islam. And that was intolerable. This image of the Zionist Jew is fed on a daily basis with feelings of deep indignation and anger regarding the theft, the plundering, the occupation of the Arabs' Holy Land – Palestine – by Israel. The metamorphosis from Jew to Zionist is experienced in the Arab world – right up to today – as an unending provocation and a scandal, since it throws doubt on the superiority of Islam. The roles have been reversed: after the Moslems in the Middle East had ruled over powerless and humiliated Jews for more than twelve-and-a-half centuries, now the Jews, they typify as 'powerless and contemptible', rule over the Moslems, certainly in the occupied territories but in fact throughout the whole of the Middle East. The Muslims have been deeply shaken in their religious beliefs by these new circumstances and have become extremely frustrated and traumatized. »»

THE SCHEME OF THE RETURN

- 1840 - Start of the Messianic Age**, announced by Rabbi Judah Hai Alkalai. The beginning also of a public and political debate in Engeland for the RETURN. **Eruption of the blood libel**, an ancient accusation, then known as the Damascus Affair.
- 1840 + (2x11) = 1862 - Public announcements by both Kalischer and Hess for the RETURN.
- 1840 + (3x11) = 1873 - **Beginning antisemitism new style**, fuelled by the Founder's Scam, that was to become the prime motivator for the RETURN.
- 1917 - (2x10) = 1897 - The Zionist Congress: the first Jewish National Assembly since the nation had lost its independence and the first tangible sign of the renaissance of the Jewish people.
- 1840 + (7x11) = 1917 - End of Ottoman subjugation and issuing of the Balfour Declaration, establishing the right to the RETURN.
- 1840 + (9x11) = 1939 - **Violation of the pledge** by means of the White Paper. Also the start of World War II. The antisemite monster broke out.
- 1917 + (3x10) = 1947 - Announcement of end British Mandate (Jerusalem divided).
- 1917 + (5x10) = 1967 - End of subjugation: the whole of Jerusalem annexed.
- 1917 + (7x10) = 1987 - Start of the Palestinian uprising (Intifada).
- 1917 + (8x10) = 1997 - Commemoration of 3,000 years Jerusalem.
- 1917 + (8x11) = 2005 - Start of the implementation of the so-called Road Map.
- 1840+(15x11) = 2005 - The road map to peace did not exist, but was **in truth a sell-out of Eretz Israel by its own leaders**, leading to the tragic expulsion of Jewish settlers from the Gaza strip: a new marker of antisemitism!
-

This scheme helps to place the events related to the "Return of God's People to the land of their Fathers" in their proper context. I like to point out that it was only discovered after the story had been written down; then, the numerical relations in the timetable became a kind of self-evident revelation. I would also like to point out that the scheme in the succession of multiples of 10, after the year 1917. The year 1997 thus found, was known for the official commemoration of 3,000 years Jerusalem. Yet, according to the Panin chronology, the City of David was then already 3,022 years old, which is reckoned from the time of King David's conquest of the old town. (2 Sam. 5:4-6)

In scheme of the return we see multiples of 33, but the first Intifada of 1987 falls outside this. The scheme shows that there were outbursts of antisemitism in increments above the year 1840 of 3x11 years (1x33), of 9x11 (3x33) and finally 15x11 (5x33), which brings us to the years 1873, 1939 and 2005. The first Intifada is not to be considered an outbreak of antisemitism, but rather as a spontaneous uprising against an oppressor. In the course of time the conflict escalated and the manner of retaliation on the Arab side, in an orchestration of hatred, was horrible and transgressed all human dignity, but the cause of the Intifada 'at that point in time' (1987) is different from antisemitism. This was not staged. The immediate occasion was a deadly accident in the Gaza Strip involving an Israeli truck. The uprising came as a complete surprise for the Palestinian Liberation Organization (later: the Palestinian Authority), located in Tunis at the time, and accordingly it took them some time to take up the reins and make from Intifadas a political weapon.

It is remarkable that the intercalation of multiples of 33 solar years with 34 lunar years (1873, 1939 and 2005) coincide with the topic of antisemitism. As noted: 33 solar years minus 4,5 days equal 34 lunar years.⁴³⁾ A supreme form of antisemitism was of course the crucifixion of our Lord and Saviour at the age of 33 (Jesus was a Jew). And He is still being crucified on every corner of the streets!

But it was not until the 'Palestinian National' was forged that the Arabs could find a willing ear to their claims in the West. Essentially the idea derives from its opposition to Zionism and not by any kind of national aspirations as we are used to define 'national' here in the West. The concept of a 'Stateless Palestinian People' is not based on fact. It is a fabrication. Before the Jews started coming to the Land of Israel in increasing numbers as from the second half of the 19th century, the Land of Damascus or Greater Syria (Bilad ash-Sham), as the region was called then, was a God-forsaken backwater that was under the administrative control by the Ottoman Empire without reference to people- or nationhood. Most Arabs living on the West Bank (Judea and Samaria) and in the Gaza Strip are newcomers whose parents or grandparents came from surrounding lands after the Jews, being attracted by the relative economic prosperity brought about by the Zionist initiatives and the British presence – which does not mean that they have no right to a proper existence. It is wrong, however, to claim that the native peoples were driven out by the Jews and that therefore the Jews should disappear. We should see things as they are, not as we would like to see them.

3.18 – The Gaza Strip Expulsion

According to the 1947 United Nations partition plan for Palestine (UN Resolution 181), the Gaza region was to become part of a new Arab state. However the Arabs rejected the proposal. When the next year Israel became independent, the Egyptian army attacked Israel from the South. Although Israel repulsed the attack, pressure from the British to reach a cease-fire prevented Israel from driving Egypt's defeated forces from Gaza, now reduced to a narrow strip, referred to ever since as the Gaza Strip. Yet Egypt did not extend citizenship to the inhabitants of the Gaza Strip, who became therefore without citizenship. Under Egyptian rule its population increased sharply as so-called Palestinian refugees entered the region en masse. The access to Egypt of the inhabitants of Gaza was restricted and most of them became permanently dependent on the United Nations Relief handouts.

In 1956 Israel conquered the Gaza Strip in retaliation for Egypt's policy in nationalising the Suez Canal and closing off shipping routes to Israel. But Israel relinquished the territory soon afterwards under international pressure. During the next decade, Egypt used

43) Lag ba-Omer is a special day in the Jewish calendar. 'Lag' is Hebrew for number 33. The omer, which is 'sheaf' (of grain), indicates the 49-day interlude that falls between Passover and Pentecost, based on the prescription of Leviticus 23:10-16. The Greek 'pentecoste' means 50th and thus indicates the day after the interlude. From the barley harvest at Passover to the wheat harvest at Pentecost, the progress of the omer harvests are counted daily as an expression of trust in God's provision. Lag ba-Omer is the 33rd day within this period.

At some time in history, the counting of the 'omer' became a period of semi-mourning. Why, is not known, but it is perhaps related to the recession of the equinox. (see article: The Sun Miracle) Among observant Jews, there are no weddings then or haircuts permitted. In the midst of this time of grief, on the Lag ba-Omer, the haircuts restrictions are suddenly lifted. That day becomes a day of celebration and joy: marriages are allowed, and in orthodox circles do take place by the dozens; then three-year-old boys get their first haircut, children play with bows and arrows and bonfires are lit.

the Gaza Strip as a staging post for terrorist attacks against Israel. This contributed to the outbreak of the Six-Day War of 1967, in which Israel occupied the Gaza Strip, the Sinai, the West Bank, and also the Golan Heights. During the 1970s and 1980s the Israeli government purchased land in the Gaza Strip to build Israeli settlements in order to consolidate its presence. Resentment made the region a hotbed for Palestinian activism and political unrest. Riots, demonstrations and violent confrontations between Israelis and Palestinians developed into the Palestinian uprising of 1987, which spread quickly to the West Bank at the other side of Israel.

Israel signed the Oslo Accords in 1993 in order to transfer social responsibility for Palestinians to a new body called the Palestinian Authority (PA). Under the agreement, the PA managed Palestinian affairs in the Gaza Strip, while Israel maintained control over Israeli settlements, foreign policy, and armed forces. By late May 1994 most of Israel's armed forces had withdrawn from the Gaza Strip and the PA had assumed administrative control. Implementation of Palestinian self-rule reduced the violence in the Gaza Strip for several months. However in November 1994 clashes occurred between Palestinian police and members of the Islamic groups Hamas and Islamic Jihad, who opposed the peace process. In early 1995 these factions claimed responsibility for a number of suicide bombings and other terrorist acts against Jewish citizens in Israel and the Gaza Strip. The government of Israel reacted by shutting its borders to thousands of Gazans employed in Israel.

In September 1995 Israel and the Palestinian Authority, led by Yasser Arafat, signed a second peace agreement providing for Palestinian elections and extending limited self-rule to almost all Palestinian towns and refugee camps in the West Bank. Yet, under the credo of hate, the firing of rockets from the Gaza Strip to neighbouring towns in Israel continued unabated, as well as suicide bombings.

The Second Intifada broke out in September 2000 under the pretext of Ariel Sharon's visit to the Temple Mount complex in Jerusalem. Six months later he was to become Prime Minister of Israel. Then, in the course of 2004, it became clear that Prime Minister Sharon was pressing ahead with the unilateral withdrawal from the Gaza Strip of all the 17 Jewish settlements. This was seen as a result of the Oslo Accords. The cry was "land for peace" and we have to follow the "Road Map", but in truth there was no Road Map! It was a duping of the Israeli people by politicians who could only think in secular terms. Even the question a politician could ask himself: "God, do You want me to do this?" was thought preposterous and an insult to human dignity.

In the year 2005 the expulsion started of all the Jewish inhabitants of the Gaza Strip. On August 13 the Gush Katif region, located within the Gaza Strip, was closed to non-residents, in keeping with Ariel Sharon's disengagement plan. Most settlers did not voluntarily leave their homes or even pack in preparation for the eviction. On August 15th the week-long forcible and traumatic evacuation of the Gush Katif settlements began. The forces deployed were not Nazi soldiers, but consisted of the nation's own sons and daughters in military dress. In reality, many residents returned to pack the contents of their homes and then, on August 23, the Israeli government began the destruction of all residential buildings. On September 12th the Israeli army withdrew from the seventeen settlements up to the 'Green Line'. All public buildings – schools, libraries, community centres, as well as industrial buildings, factories and greenhouses which could not be taken apart – were left intact. On that day, thousands of overjoyed Palestinians, with the approval of Palestinian Authority officials and police, took part in ransacking, vandalism, and destruction of the synagogues and some other buildings. The final result of Prime Minister Sharon's policy was anything but peace. It has brought a chain of misery on Israel and in particular on the brave people of Gush Katif.

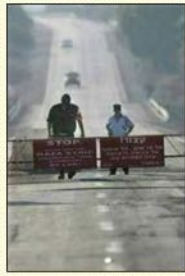


PHOTO ESSAY, GAZA, 15 AUG. 2005



Waarom???



De nieuwe inwoners



In order to analyse the situation – understanding it is another matter – we need to go back to the Oslo Agreements of 1993. These were based on the principle of “land for peace”. Israel was to transfer power over Palestinian areas to the inhabitants, who were under Arafat’s leadership. His troops were even provided with weapons by Israel so that they could enforce day-to-day authority. In exchange Arafat promised to rein in the violence. The terrorist organisations were to be combated and in the end dismantled in order to make clear to the people that peace with Israel was the new outlook for the future. Arafat did not even take the trouble to keep his promises, interpreting Israel’s approach as a sign of weakness that should be exploited. The turnaround to peace – as we saw in the case of Nelson Mandela – failed to happen. Instead, Arafat and the parties allied to him such as the Al Aqsa brigade simply turned up the terror. The number of victims of suicide attacks in the five years following Oslo was greater than in the previous fifteen years.

Instead of education for peace, a government-sponsored hate campaign was launched, a campaign that penetrated every part of Palestinian society, right down to the infant schools. This produced an unimaginably hateful society in which a youth sports event was named after a terrorist whose heroic deed had been to shoot dead an Israeli baby, where children’s TV showed Mickey Mouse calling for violent acts against Jews and where summer camps were transformed into centres for brainwashing in the name of terror. All of this was aided and abetted by the lunatic policies of Sharon and his supporter, Shimon Peres, who later (2007) was to become the ninth President of the State of Israel.

Daniel's year-weeks and the counting of the end of a time

The State of Israel was born on May 14, 1948, but its conception on November 29, 1947 (Kislev 16, 5708). Then the United Nations accepted the partition plan by a large majority (Resolution 181). From this resolution follows the seventy-year count referred to at Daniel 9:25: *"Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until the Messiah-Monarch, there shall be 69 weeks (years) (...) even in troublesome times."* This agrees with Luke 21:32, where is written: *"Assuredly, this generation will by no means pass away till all things have taken place."* In this parable the budding of the fig tree is symbolic for the restoration of Israel. (cf. Hos. 9:10, Jer. 24:5) Based on the duration of the Exodus, a biblical generation takes about 70 years. Indeed, the minimum age of the men fit to conquer the Promised Land was 20 years old; and as they were too frightened to do it, all the people had to stay in the wilderness for 40 years, all the people had to stay in the wilderness for 40 years, until all combatants as from the age of 20 or more had died. (Num. 14:29, 33) Assuming a modal age of combatants of about 30 years, one generation can be put at a length of 70 years. If Daniel's prophecy is combined with that of Luke, then the end time will be completed around the year 2018 (1948 + 70).

They were not alone. It was also the work of so many others who do not want to know about a 'chosen people' with a 'land given by God' or with a 'God-given task'. Who instead want to make their own dream come true and intermingle with the nations. It is no coincidence that Marx was a Jew and the original Jewish colonists were mainly socialists and communists. With God's people the choices are always difficult and the consequences always dramatic. Being chosen has its disadvantages! The culmination of the betrayal by their elected leaders was the eviction of the inhabitants from Gush Katif, when the best of the people were banished to some kind of cardboard refugee camp. The Yesha Council of Judea-Samaria (a sort of provincial government body), in a report it published in May 2007 with quotes from well known Israelis, politicians and journalists, named it *"one of the worst crimes in the history of the Jewish people committed by a Jewish Government on its own citizens."*

God does not passively watch when his country is being gambled. On 26 cheshvan 5768 or november 7, 2007, the "SOS Israel" organization dispatched a letter to US President George W. Bush warning him that American pressure on Israel to withdraw from parts of the Land of Israel and divide Jerusalem at the upcoming Annapolis Conference is liable to lead to disasters befalling America.⁴⁴⁾ The rabbis pointed out that they had made a similar prediction in 2005, prior to the US-backed disengagement request from the Gaza Strip and northern Samaria. The letter went as follows:

«« We have written to President Bush, a man who believes in the Bible, to warn him against the terrible danger to which he is exposing his country by hosting such a conference. The land of Israel belongs to the people of Israel. God punishes anyone who coerces Israel to give up His land [God's land].⁴⁵⁾ There is no doubt the New Orleans flood from the Katrina hurricane was God's punishment for evicting the settlements (in Gaza), with hundreds of thousands left homeless, hundreds killed or wounded and billions of dollars [estimated

44) Source: IsraelNN.com – The letter was undersigned by the Rabbis Dov Wolpe, Dov Lior, Yekutiell Rapp, Gedalia Axelrod and Yaakov Yosef, son of former Chief Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, and Rabbijn Meir Druckman.

45) The region of Israel is God's land. God does not submit to human arbitrariness, certainly not in this regard, according to Leviticus 25:23: "You (people of Israel) shall not sell the land (which I have given you in ownership), for the land is Mine; you are strangers and sojourners with Me."

at USD 125 billion] sent down the drain – can we really ignore God’s hand collecting an eye for an eye? »»»

Hurricane Katrina, that destroyed New Orleans on August 29 and caused 1835 deaths, formed on August 23rd, 2005 – on the day that the Disengagement from Gush Katif was completed. Katrina displaced over one million people from the central Gulf coast to elsewhere across the United States, becoming the largest diaspora in the history of the US. Since that fatal week in August 2005 and elsewhere in the country more evictions have followed and plans have been drawn up to grant even more land to Arabs, whereby there is even mention of an enclave in the middle of the country. And the letter continues:

«« This time the Almighty is warning the US in advance: if the plague of water was not enough now He shall send flames. While hundreds of thousands of families have already fled the terrible fires in California, and we ask you: “Will you really forge ahead with this malevolent plan?” »»»

Since the Gush Katif disaster, the existential problems confronting Israel, that tiny strip of land on the Mediterranean, have only increased. More shootings, a war in Lebanon and added tension along the border with Syria. Blood goes on flowing and a perspective on peace is turned into despair. The Road Map has turned out to be an illusion and the plan of withdrawal a sickening sales pitch. For that reason alone the eviction of the inhabitants of Gush Katif earns its place in the timetable of the restoration of God’s Chosen People – to be precise, 5 x 33 years since the beginning of the dawn of the Messianic Era. The clock goes on ticking, as it has done for more than 180 years... Which ‘also’ means that peace and justice have come closer.

More than a glimmer of hope

I would now like to draw your attention to a statement that God entrusted to his spokesperson known by the acronym J.N.S.R. In her normal life she is a housewife living in France and the letters J.N.S.R. stand for “Je ne suis rien” or “I am nothing”, but also “Jésus notre Seigneur revient” or “Our Lord Jesus is to return”. I now quote from her prophecy of June 3rd 2003: «« The [world] events will continue with ever greater intensity and all will be thrown down, displaced. The hearts will be obliged to acknowledge Me by all the signs that I will give to the whole world. Visible signs and invisible, those which will pass into the hearts, even in those who do not listen to Me. I shall talk with such Love that the most cruel of them will melt like the snow before the sun: it is My Grace that will act in those hearts of stone. Just imagine an insurmountable wall that will be crossed everywhere without consideration of its height. It is not a miracle that man will perform, it is not a spectacular miracle that I will be performing before your eyes: it is greater than that. God, in His infinite Goodness will break down the wall that has always separated the hostile brothers. No, it is not by the will of man, but by that of God. I have said: at present you should unite for Peace and this should spread throughout the whole world because I desire that My Peace should come from My Country, Israel. Nothing will come from man and yet they will brag that they are in the process of signing a peace that sincerely comes from each human being wanting to unite the countries that have always confronted each other. This is my first sign and you may announce it already. And you, you know that this will be accomplished by your God, your Jesus of Love, to the greater Glory of God, My Father and your Father. This remains and will remain the greatest sign, for this is the beginning of Peace, of My Peace in the whole world. »»

APPENDIX 3

Antisemitism, 'not yet' a thing of the Past

The timetable of the return contains four dates that recall Ezekiel 20:32-37:

«« And your desire to be like the Gentiles (...) that shall never be. As I live, says the Lord God, surely with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out, I will rule over you. I will bring you [Israel] from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you are scattered, with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out. (...) I make you pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the Covenant. »»

Anti-Semitism was definitely not by God, but He allowed it to happen to serve a higher purpose: the bringing together of his people. The four remarkable dates are: 1840, 1840 plus 1x33, plus 3x33 and plus 5x33 – or: 1840, 1873, 1939 and 2005. The year 1840 was a revival of the absurd blood libel, which during the Middle Ages seemed to have been buried, and wherein the Jews were accused of mixing the blood of Christians, 'as always', with their Eastern matzes. The year 1873 was the beginning of a new style persecution of the Jews called antisemitism, a new term instead of Judenhass. The year 1873 is more or less obvious, but without the timetable, I would not have recognised 1939 as decisive. What happened that year?

On his return home on 30th Sept. 1939, Neville Chamberlain, British Prime Minister, was enthusiastic about the Munich Agreement he had just reached with Hitler, and he then declared arrogantly the infamous words: *"My good friends, for the second time in our history, a British Prime Minister has returned from Germany bringing peace with honour. I believe it is peace for our time."* Yet this agreement had only become possible after the overt antisemitism of the German Reich had been classified as politically irrelevant. To this end, a few months earlier, the British government had issued a White Paper, also known as the MacDonald White Paper, which meant a clear reversal of the Balfour Declaration. I am convinced that without the White Paper, Hitler's initiatives to get rid of the Jewish people would have met serious resistance and angry reactions in the Western countries. But instead, during the war the German machine of Death Camps was ignored. It should be mentioned that an important cause for this wall of silence was that it appeared too unbelievable to be true and therefore the people who heard of it did not register it mentally. No attempts were ever made to bomb the railway lines leading to the Extermination Camps. And there were never any bombardments carried out on the camps themselves, though it would not have been all that difficult. Instead, bombing of the civilian centres had a higher priority during the whole war effort – under the leadership of Bomber Harris or Butch Harris (Sir Arthur Travers Harris), who has rightly been called a war criminal. But wasn't Herbert Kitchener a war criminal too? (for what he did during the Boer War) Both were honoured and graciously decorated for their 'contributions'.

If we extend the reasoning to the expulsion from the Gaza Strip, we may conclude that this outrage too carried within itself the seeds of the destruction of the Jewish people, though now on home territory, an event that thanks to God will be prevented. Of course, the Jewish people will always survive; God needs them – and we need them too – to fulfill the divine plans and to carry out the solemn promises God made to Abraham and his offspring.



THE RETURN OF ANTI-SEMITISM TO GERMANY - IT NEVER REALLY LEFT

By William E. Grim (2002), with [amendments]

January 30, 1933 – Hitler Appointed Chancellor



I'm not Jewish. Nobody in my family died in the Holocaust. For me, anti-Semitism has always been one of those phenomena that doesn't really register on my radar, like tribal genocide in Rwanda, a horrible thing that happens to someone else. But I live in a small town outside of Munich on a street that until May of 1945 was named Adolf-Hitler-Strasse. I work in Munich, a pleasant metropolitan city of a little over a million inhabitants whose Bavarian charm tends to obscure the fact that this city was the birthplace and capital of the Nazi movement. Every day, when I go to work, I pass by the sites of apartments Hitler lived in, extant buildings in which decisions were made to murder millions of innocent people, and plazas in which book burnings took place, SS troops paraded and people were executed. The proximity to evil has a way of concentrating one's attention, of putting a physical reality to the textbook narratives of the horrors perpetrated by the Germans.

Maybe it's because I have blond hair

Then the little things start to happen that over a period of time add up to something very sinister. I'm on a bus and a high school boy passes around Grandpa's red leather-bound copy of Mein Kampf to his friends who respond by saying "coooooo!" He then takes out a VCR tape (produced in Switzerland) of "The Great Speeches of Joseph Goebbels". A few weeks later I'm at a business meeting with four young highly educated Germans who are polite, charming and soft-spoken to say the least. When the subject matter changes to a business deal with a man in New York named Rubinstein, their nostrils

flair, their demeanors attain a threatening mien and one of them actually says - and I'm quoting verbatim here: "*The problem with America is that the Jews have all the money.*" They start laughing and another one says: "*Yeah, all the Jews care about is money.*"

You could have knocked me over with a feather. I half expected one of them to start talking about the veracity of The Protocols of the Elders of Zion. Here were four young, charming, well-educated Germans spewing forth anti-Semitic bile that would have made Julius Streicher proud. I found that this type of anti-Semitic reference in my professional dealings with Germans soon became a leitmotif (to borrow a term made famous by Richard Wagner, another notorious German anti-Semite, taken over also in French). In my private meetings with Germans it often happens that they will loosen up after a while and reveal personal opinions and political leanings that were thought to have ceased to exist in a Berlin bunker on April 30, 1945, the day when Hitler committed suicide.

Maybe it's because I have blond hair and my last name is of German origin that Germans feel that I am, or could potentially be, 'one of them'. It shows how little they understand what it means to be an American. Whatever the reason, the conversations generally have one or more of these aspects:

- (1) It was unfortunate that America and Germany fought each other in World War II because the real enemy was Russia.
- (2) Yes, the Nazis were excessive, but terrible things happen during wars, and anyway, the extent of the Holocaust has been greatly exaggerated by the Jewish-controlled American media. [It seems, the true figure of Jews killed is likely a little more than five million instead of six, but that does not detract from the attempted extermination of God's own people.]
- (3) CNN is controlled by American Jews and is anti-Palestinian.
- (4) Almost all Germans were opposed to the Third Reich and nobody in Germany knew anything about the murder of the Jews, but the Jews themselves were really responsible for the Holocaust.
- (5) Ariel Sharon, [then prime minister of Israel,] is worse than Hitler and those kind of Israelis are Nazis. America supports Israel only because of Jewish control of the government and media.

For the first time in my life, then, I became conscious of anti-Semitism. Sure, anti-Semitism exists elsewhere in the world, but has nowhere been as devastating as in Germany.

Internal Nazism remains

Looking at it as objectively as possible, 2002 has been a banner year for anti-Semitism in Germany. Synagogues have been firebombed, Jewish cemeteries desecrated, the number one best-selling novel, Martin Walser's "Death of a Critic", is a thinly-veiled roman à clef containing a vicious anti-Semitic attack on Germany's best-known literary critic, Marcel Reich-Ranicki (who is a survivor of both the Warsaw ghetto and Auschwitz), and last but not least the Free Democrat Party has unofficially adopted anti-Semitism as a campaign tactic to attract Germany's sizeable Muslim minority. German revisionist historians are now beginning to define German perpetration of World War II and the Holocaust not as crimes against humanity, but as early battles in the Cold War against Communism with, so they say, regrettable but understandable excesses. The situation is so bad that German Jews are advised not to wear anything in public that would identify them as Jewish, because their safety cannot be guaranteed.

How can this be? Isn't this the 'New Germany' that's gone 57 straight years without a Holocaust or even a pogrom, where truth, justice and the German way prevail amidst

economic wealth, a high standard of living that is the envy of their European neighbors, and a constitution guaranteeing freedom for everyone regardless of race, creed or origin? What has changed? The answer is: absolutely nothing.

My thesis is quite simple. While Germany no longer has the military power to enforce the racist ideology of the Nazis and while all extreme manifestations of Nazism are officially outlawed, the internal conditions – that is, the attitudes, worldview and cultural assumptions – that led to the rise of Nazism in Germany are still present because they constitute the basic components of German identity. Nazism, according to my approach, was not an aberration; it was the distillation of the German psyche into its essential elements. External Nazism may have been utterly defeated in May of 1945; internal Nazism, however, remains, and will always remain, a potential threat as long as there exists a political and/or cultural entity known as Germany.

Now hold on a second, I hear many people saying. You can't possibly claim that Germans are as anti-Semitic today as they were during the years 1933-1945. It is true that Germany today is much different than during the Third Reich. What is different is that due to its total defeat by the Allies, Germany today is a client state of America and must do its bidding. That means repression of overt anti-Semitism, for that's bad for business.

The other thing that has changed is that, even though Hitler lost World War II, he was phenomenally successful in carrying out his ideological agenda. Germany, indeed virtually all of Europe, is essentially 'Judenfrei' (free of Jews) due to the efficiency and zeal of the Germans as they perpetrated the Holocaust in service of the Third Reich. In fact, a very convincing case can be made that Nazism was one of the most successful political programs ever. It accomplished more of its goals in a shorter amount of time than any other comparable political movement and permanently changed the face and political structure of several continents. Nowadays, Germany is wealthy, stable, relentlessly bourgeois and for all intents and purposes, free of Jews.

Yes, there is a tiny minority of Jews mostly centered in Berlin, and yes, there have been a number of Jews from the former Soviet Union who have emigrated to Germany, but most of the immigrants from Russia are not practicing Jews and do little if anything to promote a unique Jewish-German identity. The result of all this is that the Germans today are able to reap the benefits of Hitler's anti-Semitic policies while paying lip service to the 'need to remember'.

Young Fritz doesn't have to be overtly anti-Semitic today because as a matter of fact his grandfather's generation did such a bang-up job of the Holocaust. There just aren't that many Jews left to hate any more, and besides, the Germans have their old buddies, the Arabs, to do their hating for them. You might call the overwhelming German support for the Palestinian's political agenda to be a form of anti-Semitism-by-proxy.

The German government has made cash payments to the State of Israel as well as to individual Jews, to settle claims of murder, torture, false imprisonment, slave labor and genocide. Talk to most Germans and you'll soon discover that they think that the score has been settled between Germany and the Jews, that somehow the return of just a portion of what the Germans stole from the Jews is fair recompense for the deliberate murder of millions of people. If you think the Germans are truly sorry for what they did to the Jews, think again. There's never been an official "es tut mir leid" (I feel sorry) being offered by the Germans to the Holocaust victims and their descendants, for that would admit culpability. Germany GmbH has paid off all claims against it without acknowledging responsibility in the same way that the Ford Motor Company engages in recalls of defective automobiles. It's all done to avoid a real liability claim.

German dialogue about the Holocaust is largely done in the subjunctive, passive mood: “Mistakes were made”. The reason for this, I believe, is the myth of German superiority, overtly stated during the Nazi years, but still a major component of the German psyche. [Yet, in September 1951, Chancellor Adenauer delivered an historic speech in the Bundestag during which he asked forgiveness for the crimes of Nazi Germany and stated that he was ready to commence negotiations with world Jewry on the issue of Holocaust reparations. And on 19 Apr. 2023, on the anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, Germany’s President Frank-Walter Steinmeier asked for forgiveness for the crimes that his country committed in the Second World War. (This disproves the argument put forward by William Grim.)]

[And there is more. Almost seven decades after the end of World War II, the German Medical Association made a long overdue apology. In a stunning admission it was stated that German doctors from all strata of the profession enthusiastically supported Nazi ideology and were not coerced to support Hitler. The Declaration of May 12, 2012, which was unanimously adopted by the delegates of the Physician’s Congress declared:

«« In contrast to still widely accepted view, the initiative for the most serious human rights violations did not originate from the political authorities at the time, but rather from the physicians themselves. (...) German doctors were guilty of scores of human rights violations. (...) The crimes were simply not the acts of individual doctors, but rather took place with the substantial involvement of leading representatives of the medical association and medical specialist bodies as well as considerable representatives of university medicine and renowned biomedical research facilities. »»]

Why is it that the Germans believe they are superior to all other nationalities? It is true that there have been many great German and especially Austrian composers, but Verdi is every bit as great a composer as Wagner. Literature? Yes, Goethe is one of the most important writers of all time, but as a dramatist he is a pale shadow compared to the Shakespearian works, and as a novelist he hardly compares to Dostoevsky and Tolstoy. Engineering and science? Perhaps, but making good-quality cars is not on the same level as sending men to the moon and returning them safely. And we all know who figured out first how to make an atomic bomb. Cuisine, lifestyle, architecture? Now you’ve got to be kidding. Just think France and Italy.

No, the German belief in their superiority is a form of self-delusion and is based upon pretty thin gruel. Ironically, it may be that bad boy of German philosophy, Friedrich Nietzsche himself, who supplied the reason for this phenomenon. Nietzsche believed that moral systems and notions of national chauvinism were largely the result of resentment, that is, the members of a politically weak people band together in their resentment of their more powerful neighbors and convince one another that, while they may be politically weak, they are somehow ‘morally superior’ to their competitors. This could very well explain the German superiority complex in the face of political weakness from the time of the Roman Empire to the Kaiser Wilhelm period, beginning in the 1870s, [not to mention the humiliating conditions and excessive reparations imposed after World War I]. It surely goes far to explain present-day German notions of superiority in the face of their devastating military defeat in World War II and the subsequent relegation to second-tier status among the community of nations.

Anti-Semitism by proxy

I have previously mentioned that Germans overwhelmingly support the Palestinians as opposed to the Israelis, and that this overwhelming support represents a form of anti-Semitism-by-proxy. Germans may claim to be supporting the Palestinians because they

think they are an ‘oppressed people’, but let’s be honest – they are supporting the Palestinians and their Arabs handlers because the Palestinians and Arabs share the same ideals as the Nazis, which goes beyond the question whether they are suppressed or not.

There’s a long-standing history of German co-operation with the Arabs. In 1942, Hitler assured the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem in a personal encounter that as soon as German forces conquered Great Britain, the Jews in Palestine (which was then under control of the British Mandate) would be exterminated. We should also keep in mind that the Arab terrorists who perpetrated the 9/11 atrocities did their planning in Germany. There are several reasons for this. The first is the well-known bungling and decentralized chaos of the German federal bureaucracy where literally the left hand doesn’t know what the right hand is doing. The second is that generally Arab terrorists can count on a substantial number of Germans who share their anti-American and anti-Semitic views.

Hitler’s “Mein Kampf” is a best seller in the Arab world, especially in Saudi Arabia, America’s putative ‘friend’. Indeed, there is very little difference between the anti-Semitic rantings of Hitler and those of the so-called ‘spiritual leaders’ of Al-Qaeda, Hamas, and Al-Fatah. The Arabs also owe Hitler and the Germans big time. Hitler killed off the Jews, and Konrad Adenauer and his ‘democratic’ descendants replaced them with Turkish immigrants. Although Turkey belongs to NATO and has foreign relations with Israel, many Turks, when put to the test, identify and support their radical Arab co-religionists. Turkey remains as fragile a democracy as Weimar Germany during the 1920s. It would not take much for Turkey to fall into the dark side of Muslim extremism.

The ideological results of Muslim immigration into Germany, though not intentionally, have been twofold:

- (1) It allows the Germans to feign liberalism and being open to freedom and diversity.
- (2) By replacing the Jews they murdered with Muslims, who for the most part are as viciously anti-Semitic as were the Nazis, the Germans have cynically assured that those few Jews who remain in Germany will be unable to reassert political power even in a minority role.

German politicians have now begun to express anti-Semitic viewpoints as a means to curry favor with Germany’s substantial Muslim minority. The most notorious example of this is Juergen Moellmann, the Jew-baiting second-in-command of the Free Democrat Party, the political faction that is most closely identified with business interests, favoring policies such as lowering taxes and reducing government expenditures, and other issues of a libertarian slant. Moellmann’s strategy is quite simple. In a parliamentary system such as Germany’s, where seats are allocated according to vote gains, with a party such as the FDP, which rarely gets more than 10% of the vote, an extremist anti-Semitic utterance is directed at racist Muslims, seeking to garner an extra one to two percent of the vote, which could result in the FDP becoming the minority partner in a coalition government.

If there were true justice in the world...

A final point that I would like to make concerning the reasons for the resurgence of anti-Semitism in Germany is one that many will find at odds with the prima-facie evidence, or even something that appears to stretch the boundaries of common sense. Yet, I ask you to consider carefully my line of reasoning.

In many respects Germany got away with the Holocaust without paying much of a price. Yes, many Germans died as a result of German’s perpetration of World War II and the Holocaust, and yes, there was much physical destruction in the country, [and yes,

because of the hunger blockade more than ten million Germans starved to death after the war, twice the number of Holocaust victims to which should be added the 1.5 million German civilian casualties because of the systematic fire bombing of the whole of Germany by the English.] But the situation is and remains like the little boy who steals a cookie from the tray when it is cooling on the kitchen table. For his transgression he may have gotten his hand slapped by his mother, but the cookie remains eaten nonetheless. [Again, William Grim goes in the overdrive and forgets about the facts.]

The Germans regained their sovereignty after only ten years, after having committed the worst crimes in the history of humankind, [only to be surpassed by the hushed up genocide of the Irish during the Potato Famine in mid 19th century, when out of a total of 8.1 million the English managed to exterminate 6.2 million Irish]. Their infrastructure was completely rebuilt thanks to the generosity of the American people. Relatively few Germans were brought to trial for their monstrous crimes. Even those who were tried and convicted received relatively short sentences or had those reduced or commuted in general amnesties. For example, some members of the Einsatzkommandos, those Germans who, before the construction of the death camps, hunted and murdered Jews by the hundreds of thousands, received sentences of as little as five years imprisonment.

If justice reigned, Germany would no longer exist as a separate country, but would have long ago had its territory divided up and dispersed among the Allies. It was an unfortunate historical coincidence that the Cold War began just as Germany was at last being brought to task for its many crimes and atrocities, extending back to the First World War. The new threat of the Soviet Union took precedence over a just settling of accounts with Germany. The tragic result is that many of the countries raped and despoiled by Germany, such as the Czech Republic and Poland, are just now (in 2002) coming out of decades of economic decline, while Germany – fat, sassy, arrogant, self-satisfied, and essentially Judenfrei – has enjoyed four decades of economic prosperity.

We can't turn back the clock to redress all of the historical wrongs that have been committed by the Germans, but there are a number of things that can be done to assure that Germany can never again be in a position to threaten the rest of the civilized world. First and foremost is the realization that, while not all Germans are anti-Semitic, there is an anti-Semitic tendency within German culture that extends back to the time of Martin Luther. Germans are instinctively anti-Semitic in the same way that Americans are instinctively freedom loving. Anti-Semitism has been and unfortunately remains the default ideology of the German people. All things being equal, Germans will instinctively support the enemies of the State of Israel. Therefore, America will need to monitor closely and be ready and politically willing to intervene at a moment's notice in German affairs, when it happens to be that Germany is back-sliding into anti-Semitism.

Moreover, it should be a goal of U.S. foreign policy not to tolerate German domination of the EU through parliamentary maneuvering and lobbying to achieve what Hitler and the Germans could not achieve during the Third Reich. Given the resurgent anti-Semitism of Germany, as well as France, a strong German-dominated EU that tolerates and even benevolently encourages anti-Semitism and sets itself up as the diplomatic ally of the Arab world, is potentially the greatest threat to Judaism since Nazi Germany, and will prove to be a threat to the United States as well.

William E. Grim is a writer who lives in Germany
and is a native of Columbus, Ohio

Comments on the blog

Posted on 16 Aug. 2002 by Cato Renasci

(1) While the anecdotal evidence Grim cites is interesting, his thesis that anti-Semitism is somehow entwined with German national identity is far beyond the mark. German anti-Semitism is just a particular case of European anti-Semitism in general, for the lot of them are infected. Even the Norwegians and Swedes, if they think you're sympathetic, will make anti-Semitic comments, and the French, Swiss, Italians and Brits are fairly open about it.

Posted on 17 Aug. 2002 by Goetz von Berlichingen

(2) From the pen of Mr. Churchill, writing about the Russian Revolution: «« This movement amongst the Jews is not new. From the days of Spartacus Weishaupt to those of Karl Marx, and down to Trotsky, Bela Kuhn, Rosa Luxemburg and Emma Goldman, this world wide conspiracy for the overthrow of civilization and the reconstruction of society on the basis of arrested development, of envious malevolence, and impossible equality, has been steadily growing. It played, as a modern writer, Mrs. Nesta Webster, has so ably shown, a definitely recognizable part in the tragedy of the French Revolution. It has been the mainspring of every subversive movement during the Nineteenth Century; and now at last this band of extraordinary personalities has gripped the Russian people by the hair of their heads and have become practically the undisputed masters of that enormous empire. There is no need to exaggerate the part played in the creation of Bolshevism and in the actual bringing about of the Russian Revolution by these international and for the most part atheistic Jews. Moreover, the principal inspiration and driving power comes from Jewish leaders. »»

The following appears to be a commentary by a Jewish man

(3) This is the very first post-Holocaust picture of Germany that I have ever seen published that depicted the post-Holocaust country of the Nazis with absolute accuracy in every detail. I do not know Mr. Grim, but I salute him for his clear view and thank him for writing this piece, which, had it been written by a Jew, would never be believed nor given its proper credence.

It took only a few minutes during my first visit back to the land of my birth for me to realize that the place was clearly no different than when my parents and I had the good fortune to be among the very last Jews to escape, literally minutes before midnight, when the gates of that man-made hell slammed shut with a resounding clang for the final time, dooming those of my People left behind, including over fifty of my immediate family. I recall the words of my beloved grandfather as we came to Breslau to say our final farewell, knowing that there was no likelihood of ever seeing each other again. He ran alongside the slowly rolling departing train we were on, knowing he was bidding a final farewell to his only son and his family. Even then he optimistically maintained that "no harm will come to us. After all, I served my country and my Kaiser as an officer, and have always been a good citizen."

Posted on 17 Aug. 2002 by Alas Babylon!

(4) I know many older Germans who love America and Americans. I lived four years in a small town outside of Kaiserslautern in western Germany. There is a cemetery there with a monument to several civilians killed by an American bombing in late 1944. My older friend Ruprecht showed it to me; his Uncle, Aunt and several cousins were killed in this raid. He told me he had no bitterness or hatred because of it; it was war after all, and the only emotion he had was sadness.

He told me this story about the last few days of the war. It was about March 7-10, 1945 that this occurred on. The dates are based on his recollection. As follows: «« I was 13 years old. Old enough to be drafted. On the night of March 7th the SS came through the town rounding up any man or boy who could carry a rifle. Those that did not come out and join immediately were shot in the street after being drug out of their home, hiding places, whatever. Ruprecht's mother hid him, his brothers, and his cousins in the attic, and just when the SS came into their home to search for them, an American P-38 plane came over the town, located in the bottom of a steep valley, strafing the SS vehicles and soldiers on the Hauptstrasse. This led to a general stir of dodging, fleeing Nazis. Several Nazis died or were wounded. The SS forgot about seaching my house and abandoned the town. The next day an errie quiet took over the town. The US army was only a few miles away. No troops, German or otherwise, were around anywhere. Before fleeing, the SS had left a road block of disabled half-trucks, tree trunks, and stones on the main valley road. This road is now Bundesstrasse 49 coming up from Pirmesans. No soldiers manned this post, however. Fearing an American attack, I myself and the town's men – mostly very old or very young; all the rest were fighting or dead – decided to remove the road block to show the soon-to-be arriving Americans the villagers meant no harm. Shortly after doing this, the Americans arrived. All the villagers were scared, thinking the Americans would do us harm, but it did not happen. It was like a parade, with the dirty, muddy Americans smiling, offering candy bars and gum. The first time I tried gum! They were heading to Kaiserslautern. After taking Kaiserslautern, the Americans set up a supply depot at the railway marshalling yard. I had heard from my cousins that some box cars had food in them - we were about starving at this time. So I snuck down there that night and found a half open box car full of American potatoes! Sneaking out with half a sack, I was caught by an American patrol. I began to cry, thinking I would be shot, and indeed, if this had been the German army, they would have done. But the Americans took pity on me and loaded up another sack of potatoes in their jeep and drove me several kilometers to my home!!! »»

Many, many older Germans have stories like this one. I was amazed, frankly, to hear them. Almost to a man and woman, these older Germans have fond memories of American GI's kindness during and immediately after the war.

Kreis Kaiserslautern became part of the French occupation zone after the war. These same older Germans had a totally opposite opinion of the French. The French were brutal, mean, and rightly or wrongly, took their revenge on these folks. A great many died during the winter of 1945-46 [and in the two years following]. There were many killings, robberies and rapes. Since the area I was in, consisted mainly of small villages and farms, predation on the farmers was rampant. Ruprecht had many stories of the French troops taking or killing the farmers meager livestock for no reason at all, leaving them without animals or food for the winter. [Unbeknownst by many historians, this was at the time not only French policy, but also of the other allied forces, acting on strict orders from on high.]



APPENDIX 4

• The Damascus Affair: Turning Point in History

The Damascus Affair was a notorious blood libel in 1840 in which Christian anti-semitism and popular Muslim anti-Jewish feelings came to a head, and those were aggravated by the political struggle of the European powers for more influence in the Middle East. We are now going to discuss the affair based on the book “The Damascus Affair: ‘Ritual Murder’, Politics, and the Jews in 1840” by Jonathan Frankel (Cambridge University Press # 1997). This well researched book of almost 500 pages fine print, is the first since the 1840s to analyse the Damascus Affair in a complete and scholarly fashion. When I quote Frankel, I only refer to the pages. There are also quite a number of quotes ad verbum from the 2nd edition of The Encyclopaedia Judaica from 2007, which discusses the affair under “Damascus Affair”, but those I have not put within quotation marks.

There have been many blood libels in the past, also in those relatively modern times, but they were always dismissed by the Ottoman rulers. This time was different, also because the entire Western press rallied to the cause of condemning the Jews. Why did the events took such a dark turn? That is source of speculation and cannot be well explained. According to Frankel (p. 58), the crucial role in the affair was probably played by Beaudin:

«« Any attempt to understand Ratti-Menton’s behavior during the Damascus Affair (who, as the French consul, initiated the affair) must also take into account the fact that as of 5 February (when it all started) he had been in the city for only three months. He was unfamiliar with the Middle East, knew no Arabic or Turkish, and was utterly dependent on the advice of those Europeans who had the experience and knowledge, which he lacked. Among those Europeans was Jean-Baptiste Beaudin, whose home was the social center of their circle. »» (p.57)

Beaudin was a very gifted man, with perfect command of Arabic, who, for a long time had been the only representative of a European state in Damascus. As Franklin observes:

«« To have pitted against them somebody so formidably gifted and so well positioned was a true nightmare for the Damascus Jews. (...) He was ubiquitous – attending the investigations; active in the cross-examinations, both public and private; often present at the torture sessions – which was never the case with Ratti-Menton, knowing full well what methods were being used. As discussed, Beaudin may well have had a hand in choosing the accused. (Franklin further observes:) Of course, if Jean-Baptiste Beaudin and the Consul Ratti-Menton initiated and guided the case, it was the Governor-General alone who kept it moving constantly forward. Without his steady application of torture, no progress would have been made. That this method of investigation was employed does not require explanation. Floggings, beatings, the kurbash [whipping with a heavy whip], and the bastinado [slapping the soles of a person’s bare feet] were part and parcel of the administrative system. It was not the least unusual to hear of people being beaten to death in an effort, for example, to extract taxes or to discover runaway recruits. »» (pp. 59, 56, 60)

It started as follows: On February 5, 1840, the Capuchin friar Thomas, an Italian who had long resided in Damascus, disappeared together with his Muslim servant Ibrahim Amara. The monk had been involved in some shady business, and the two were probably murdered by tradesmen with whom Thomas had quarreled. Nonetheless, the Capuchins immediately circulated the news that the Jews had murdered both men in order to use their blood for the Passover ritual. As Catholics in Syria were officially under French

protection, the investigation had to be conducted by the French consul. But the latter, Ratti-Menton, without restraint allied himself with the accusers. He supervised the investigation jointly with the governor general Sherif Padia. It was conducted in the most barbarous fashion. A barber, Solomon Negrin, was arbitrarily arrested and tortured until a 'confession' was extorted from him, according to which the monk would have been killed in the house of David Harari by seven Jews. The men whom he named were subsequently arrested; two of them died under the violence of the tortures, one of them converted to Islam in order to be spared, and the others were made to 'confess'. At a later stage two more men died. A Muslim servant in the service of David Harari related under duress that Ibrahim Amara was killed in the house of Meir Farhi in the presence of the latter and other Jewish notables. Most of those mentioned were arrested, but one of them, Isaac Levi Picciotto, was an Austrian and thus under the protection of his country. This led to the intervention of Austria, England, and the United States in the affair.

When some bones were found in a sewer in the Jewish quarter, the accusers proclaimed that they were those of Thomas, and buried them accordingly. An inscription on the tombstone states that the apostolic missionary Father Thomas is buried there, who would have been assassinated by the Hebrews (Jews). Then more bones were found, alleged to be those of Ibrahim Amara. But a well-known physician in Damascus, Dr. Lograso, refused to certify that they were human bones and requested that they be sent to a European university for examination. This, however, met with the opposition of the French consul. The authorities then announced that, on both the strength of the confessions and the remains of the victims, the guilt of the Jews in these murders had been proved beyond doubt. They also seized 63 Jewish children, trying to extort the hiding place of the victims' blood from their mothers.

Jonathan Frankel observes:

«« The tendency of the historians to concentrate on individuals, and more specifically on Ratti-Menton, has led to the relative neglect of a fundamental factor in the development of the case. It turns out that at the initial and crucial phase, in the month of February, albeit not later, the entire Christian community in Damascus supported the ritual-murder charge, or to be more precise, there is no record of anyone opposing it, even in confidence. This was not just a matter of the indigenous population. (...) Nor was it simply that a number of Catholic priests (...) were all in their different ways involved. Even more important was the fact that the small group of European businessmen and diplomats in the city, Protestants as well as Catholics, English and Italian as well as French, unreservedly endorsed the actions taken by the Count de Ratti-Menton and the Governor-General. »» (pp. 52-53)

The atrocious stories aroused the concern of the Jewish world. Western Jewry was shocked by what had happened, and vigorous protests were voiced. Western European Jews and, especially, the Jews of France and Britain, saw signs of a return to the darkness of the Middle Ages. The events also alarmed assimilated Jews, as was evident from their reactions, even some Jews who had completely broken away from Judaism. Enlightened non-Jews also protested against the accusation through the press and organized mass demonstrations. A Jewish delegation under the leadership of Moses Montefiore then left for Egypt and was received by Muhammad Ali of Egypt, the ruler also of Syria. They requested to transfer the investigation to Alexandria for judicial clarification or that the case be considered by European judges. This request was not granted, arguing that war was imminent between Egypt and Turkey. In fact, both Muhammad Ali and the French wished to block an enquiry into the investigative methods. At the same time, the Austrian consul general in Egypt received an alarming report from his colleague in Damascus and he also petitioned Muhammad Ali to put an end to the torturing. Muhammad Ali then decided to issue instructions to that effect. And so, the use of torture came

to an end on April 25, almost three months after the disappearance of the two men. However, the accusation itself was not rescinded and the investigation in Damascus continued. The Jews, whose first concern was the release of their fellow men, continued to appeal Muhammad Ali for further action. They were willing to accept the simple liberation of the prisoners without any judicial declaration of innocence. In the end it was, however, explicitly stated that their liberation was an act of justice and not merely a favor granted by the ruler. The liberation order was issued on August 28, 1840, and so it happened that those prisoners who were still alive in Damascus were saved.

Montefiore and his delegation left Egypt for Constantinople, where they appealed successfully to the Sultan for the publication of a 'firman' (decree), which would proclaim blood libels fallacious and prohibit the trial of Jews on the basis of such accusations. Nevertheless, the Catholics of Damascus continued to tell tourists about the 'saintly' friar being tortured and murdered by the Jews, and how those Jews had been saved from the gallows by the intrigues of Jewish notables from abroad. The Damascus Affair aroused Jewish awareness of the need for intercommunal cooperation, which finally resulted in the establishment of the "Alliance Israélite Universelle".

What caused extraordinary anxiety among the Jews of the West in 1840 was not only the danger facing their co-religionists in the Middle East but also, and probably even more, the fact that the accusation of ritual murder was initially accepted as a proven fact by almost the entire press of Continental Europe. Typical was a report appearing in innumerable newspapers in April:

«« Today the truth is known: of the nine accused Jews (...) seven are united in admitting everything (...) the body was suspended head down; one of the Jews held a tub to collect the blood while two others applied pressure to facilitate the flow. Then, once the source of blood had dried up, all of them, maddened, threw themselves on the corpse, cutting it to bits. »»

In Britain, such reports were treated with greater scepticism, but there the country's leading newspaper, *The Times*, persistently advanced the thesis that given the prima facie case against their religion, the onus of disproving the ritual murder charge fell squarely on the Jews. *The Times*, like the influential German *Leipziger Allgemeine Zeitung*, now extensively reproduced the arguments, elaborated upon in Christian polemics since the 13th century, that assumably passages in the Talmud would prescribe the sacrifice of Gentiles. Thus, an editorial article in *The Times*, in June 1840, could declare the affair to be "*one of the most important cases ever submitted to the notice of the civilized world. (...) Admitting for the moment (the accusation to be true), (...) then the Jewish religion must at once disappear from the face of the earth. (...) We shall await the issue, as the whole of Europe and the civilized world will do with intense interest.*"

Adding still further to the sense of embattlement and shock that now overtook large segments of European Jewry was the situation that had developed in France by the summer of 1840. Not only was the charge of ritual murder emanating from the French diplomatic delegation in Damascus persistently and vociferously supported by the entire ultramontane Catholic press led by the influential daily *l'Univers* (under the editorship of Louis Veuillot) but, making matters worse, the French premier, Adolphe Thiers, likewise gave his backing, albeit more guarded, to the consul in Syria, the Comte de Ratti-Menton. Even the very learned David Paul Drach, a famous Jewish Roman Catholic convert, believed in the blood libel, as appears from his book from 1844: "*De l'harmonie entre l'église et la synagogue*" (p. 79) (About the harmony of the church and the synagogue).

Isaac Jost, a great authority on the history of the Israelite people as from the Maccabean revolt until his days, wrote shortly after the eruption of the Damascus Affair (p. 404): "*The crisis of 1840 has to be understood not in isolation, but as a major link in the process*

leading to the entry of the Jews hitherto isolated, into World History, and into the life of the nations.” To illustrate that a new era had started for the Jewish people as a whole, Frankel subsequently refers to the historian Baruch Mevorah from his ground-breaking article of 1958 that “the total number of Jewish periodicals published in the various countries of the world more than doubled in the 1841 till ‘46 period as compared to 1835 till ‘40.” Merovah was undoubtedly right, Frankel says, to see the shock of the Damascus Affair at work here; Merovah noted for instance, that the subscription list of the Archives Israélites more than doubled in the latter half of 1840.”

In 1846 a two-volume book was published in Paris, written by Achille Laurent^{*)}: “Relation historique des affaires de Syrie depuis 1840 jusqu’en 1842” (historical account of the affairs of Syria since 1840 until 1842), which contained the complete protocols of the interrogation produced by the local and French authorities in Damascus during their investigation into the disappearance of Father Thomas and Ibrahim Amara, as well as a large collection of documents marshaled to reinforce the thesis that the ritual murder is prescribed by Judaism (or at least practiced traditionally by some Jewish sects) and that this would give the reason why the two men had been murdered by the Jews. The entire collection clearly emanated from the coterie which had manned the French Consulate in 1840, and thus could be seen as something close to an official publication. Containing, as they did, a series of confessions describing in great detail how and why the Damascener Jews had committed the murders – but omitting all mention of torture methods – the book by Achille Laurent acted over time as a creeping poison that kept seizing itself around.

In the following decades, the protocols of the interrogation were published in German, Italian, Arabic, and Russian, but the horrible tortures and deceit by the authorities were never mentioned. The idea that the ritual murder case had been conclusively proven in Damascus and that the prisoners were only released for political reasons or because of bribery, now became the leitmotif repeated ad nauseum in an extensive series of anti-semitic magazines and books, among which the respected Jesuit *La Civiltà Cattolica*^{**)}, the Nazist paper *Der Stürmer*, but also Gougenot des Mousseaux’s “Le juif, le judaïsme et la judaïsation des peuples chrétiens” (1869), “Der Talmud-jude” (1872) by August Rohling, and not to forget Henri Desportes’ “Le mystère du sang chez les juifs de tous les temps” (the mystery of the blood with the Jews of all times) (1889). In 1986, Syrian Defense Minister Mustapha Talass published a bestseller “The Matzah of Zion”, with yet another edition of the protocols together with numerous documents related to the case. It created a storm of protest from Jewish leaders and a condemnation by US Secretary of State George Schultz, but that was to no avail; the book is still being reprinted. The idea that in Damascus the ritual murder was proven, is repeated from time to time in Arabic media as well as by Arab diplomats. This has continued ever since. Several Syrian dramas and novels have been made about it, recently the 2013 “Yasmin Atik”. In it, famous actor Jihad Abdo played the role of Father Thomas.

The marble tomb, allegedly housing Father Thomas’ mortal remains, stands in the Franciscan Church in Damascus and still (in 2019) carries the inscription “Assassinato dacl



Alleged Tomb of Father Thomas in Damascus, with in it possibly animal bones.

Ebrei il giorno 5 di Febrajo dell'anno 1840” – murdered by the Hebrews (Jews) on the day of February 5, 1840. This is outrageous; the inscription, together with the grave, should have been removed a long time ago.

The Damascus Affair and accompanying hatred for Jews still seem to be topical. If the past serves as a benchmark, it will not diminish. The Bible uses the image of a woman in labor, who is in ever greater pain in the run-up to the great event.

Preis 30 Pfennig

Der Stürmer

antisches Wochenblatt zum Kampfe um die Wahrheit
HERAUSGEBER: JULIUS STREICHER

Seiten-
Nummer 1

München, im Mai 1934

16. Jahr
1934

Jüdischer Mordplan

gegen die nichtjüdische Menschheit aufgedeckt

Das Mördervolk

Die Juden haben in der ganzen Welt in einem jüdischen Mordplan. Sie sind nicht böse, sie sind nur... (text continues with antisemitic propaganda)

Judenopfer



Durch die Judentumskunde vergeht der Tod, geheimes Wissen folgend, Menschenheit... (text continues with antisemitic propaganda)

Die Juden sind unser Unglück!

1934 Stürmer special issue, showing Jews extracting blood from Christian children for use in their religious rituals.

*) According to Jonathan Frankel (p. 416), Achille Laurent was most probably the collective pseudonym of French Consul Ratti-Menton, his closest advisor Sibli Ayub, and also Jean-Baptiste Beaudin.

**) In September 1938 La Civiltà Cattolica published the details of the new Italian racial laws, which revoked the citizenship of anyone “of Jewish race” who had acquired Italian citizenship after 1918, ordering those who were not citizens to leave the country within six months. After making distinctions between the Church’s and the fascist approach to the “Jewish problem”, in particular as concerns biological arguments that were contrary to the Church’s teaching, the journal concluded that the battle against the Jews: “is to be understood as a struggle inspired solely by the need for legitimate defense of Christian people against a ‘foreign’ nation in the nations where they live and against the sworn ‘enemy’ of their well-being. This suggests the use of measures to render such peoples harmless.”

APPENDIX 5

Alkalai and his Prophetic Vision of the Redemption of Israel

Judah Ben Solomon Hai Alkalai (1798–1878) was introduced to the concept of the Jewish nation by the rabbi of Corfu, Judah ben Samuel Bibas (1780-1852), one of the originators of the concept “Hibbat Zion” (fondness for Zion) that serves as precondition for settlement in the land of Israel. In 1839 he met Alkalai in the Serbian town Semlin (Zemun), from whom he learned of the new idea of ‘teshuvah’ (remorse, repentance) that exists on a same par with ‘shivah’ (return), thus “*a return to the Land of Israel*”. Not merely inner repentance’ is called for, according to Alkalai, because inner repentance without outer repentance – the commitment to the ways of goodness as a result of inner repentance – is incomplete.

Alkalai fused the ideas of Bibas with his own, which he published in his first book called “Darkhei No’am” (ways of goodness), in the same year 1839. The outstanding feature of the message of Alkalai is his revolutionary concept toward redemption as opposed to the traditional interpretations. Teshuvah is according to the Talmud the precondition for redemption, which Alkalai explained in its literal sense of going back. This approach is the foundation of his preaching for a return to Zion (Jerusalem), woven within the traditional framework of religious thought. He expanded the usual meaning of teshuvah peratit (personal return), implying “*that each man returns from the path of evil according to the definitions of repentance given by the early sages*”, in order to reach ‘teshuvah kelalit’ (general return): “*That all of Israel returns to the land of our fathers.*”

Alkalai’s book from 1840 was a rebuttal to the scornful criticism that was heaped upon him. Entitled “Shalom Yerushalayim” (peace to Jerusalem), it contained the first reaction to the Damascus Affair and hints of a Return to Zion. The united stand of world Jewry during the Damascus Affair, as well as the struggle of the Serbs for their independence, led him to publish three years later “Minhat Yehudah” (the gift to Judah). In this work he interprets the year of the Damascus Affair, 1840, as a fateful and symbolic year for the Jewish nation on its road to redemption. The suffering of Damascus Jewry, he said, was allowed to occur by Hashem (God) in order to arouse the awareness of the Jewish people to their unsustainable plight in exile in relation “*to the imagined remoteness of Jerusalem*”. “*Complacent dwellers in foreign lands*”, he thought, “*should learn the lesson of the Damascus Affair*”.

Alkalai aroused strong opposition in orthodox circles, which rejected his concept of redemption. However, he continued to disseminate pamphlet after pamphlet, stressing that the foundation of Eretz Israel (Land of Israel) was the primary solution to the Jewish problem in Europe. He quoted the early and later sages, also using numerical concepts (gematria) to strengthen the idea that 1840 is a monumental year in the eyes of God, in the Jewish calendar year 5600. From these pamphlets, a far-reaching plan for the realization of the return to Eretz Israel emerged.

Alkalai writes in “Shalom Yerushalayim” (vol. 1 pp. 33-7) that the Jewish year 5600, equal to the Gregorian year 1840, was to be seen as the start of what would be a long process of redemption. His gematria puts for 600, with the 5000 skipped, the Hebrew word ‘TaR’ (as each number represents a letter): which means to describe. To describe, not to initiate, and therefore it was the “*start of a process towards the coming Age*” and not the start of the Age itself, the year 5600 itself to be seen as the

start of the preparation for the seventh day, known as the millennium sabbath – from 6000 till year 7000. Why 5600? As the sabbath needs to be prepared beforehand once the sixth day has passed its apex or midpoint; then, of course, its preparation starts once 60% of the sixth has passed (each day counts as a thousand years). As everyone knows, who has stayed with an observant Jewish family, on the sixth day it happens that the closer the hour of ‘candle lighting’ (sabbath starts at sunset), the more everyone rushes around to finish the affairs that have to come to a standstill once the sabbath has started. As Jonathan Frankel writes in “The Damascus Affair” from 1994:

«« According to a belief widespread in the Jewish world, the long-awaited Messiah would finally come during the year 5600, (...) an estimate based, in general terms, on the idea stated in the Talmud that the Messiah would arrive before the end of the sixth millennium and, in specific terms, based on the Zohar [dating as far back as the first century AD], that used a series of mystic calculations. »» (pp. 294-95)

And of this the Christian millennialists were well aware, especially the English ones, which explains their efforts around 1840 to convert the Jews to the Christian religion so that the Messiah might find in his ‘parousia’ (return) a well prepared people.

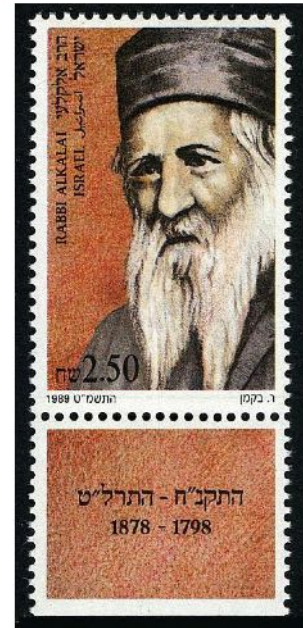
Alkalai called for the introduction of the tithe for financing settlement in the new land, for the achievement of international recognition of the Jewish migration plans to the land of Israel, for the restoration of the assembly of elders as a kind of Jewish parliament, for a revival of Hebrew (particularly spoken Hebrew), for Jewish agriculture and a Jewish army. He expressed the hope that Great Britain would supervise the execution of the program. He opposed a plan, discussed in the early 1860s, to erect houses for the Jews in Jerusalem (battei mahaseh/houses for shelter) as being merely of temporary benefit, whereas agricultural settlement would prove to be of permanent value.

Frankel concludes: “*It would be a mistake to assume that the issue of Jewish settlement in Palestine was raised in 1840 by nobody except (...) Alkalai, caught up in the hopes and fears associated with the year 5600.*” He voiced his deep rooted convictions unrelentingly in the years following, despite a deluge of criticism and neglect. One of the first to think that way was Zvi Hirsch Kalischer, who already expressed similar ideas during several occasions in the thirties, but as far as I know, not within the context of 1840. Frankel continues:

«« Second, and conversely, there was a recognizable body of opinion, sprung not from the traditional but from the modernized sections of the Jewish world, which demanded that a positive response be made to the restorationist challenge [of the Christian millennialists]. On the other hand, a group of students centered at the University of Vienna sought in 1840 and after for practical ways to advance Jewish colonization of Palestine. Remarkably, Julius Fürst opened the columns of his new weekly, the Orient, to the advocates of such programs. And so, members of the student group began to publish articles in the Orient. It eventually emerged that Fürst himself was enthusiastically committed to a strategy of Jewish settlement in the Holy Land. Even when added together none of this activity constituted anything but a most marginal factor amid the political whirlpool that had caught hold of the Jewish people in 1840 and beyond. Nonetheless, thanks to the publicity that Fürst was able to provide, the idea of Jewish colonization in the land of Israel

now became a source of considerable attention, controversy, and even excitement in some circles within the Jewish world. »» (pp. 312-13)

Although the Encyclopaedia Judaica underestimates the value of Alkalai, the later historical developments show that he had a prophetic vision in the tradition of the prophets of old. This is exemplified by the fact that the year 1840 serves as a numerical key to pin down all the important years that have led to the establishment of the State of Israel, which eventually is going to lead to the final redemption of its people, not only that, but to the final redemption of the world. Important too is that the numerical scheme gives indisputable proof, for whoever might still have lingering doubts, that the blood libel of 1840 was a filthy accusation with not a grain of truth in it. It is my wish that Alkalai gets full credit for his efforts to bring awareness to his people of the necessity of the 'alyah' (the act of going up to Jerusalem), and to point at 1840 as a monumental year in this respect. Even in Jewish circles he is unsufficiently known today and that should change.



Rabbi Judah Hai Alkalai

In 1852 Alkalai visited England in order to propagate his message for a return to Eretz Israel. He subsequently traveled to several other West European countries seeking support for his plan. In each locality that he visited he founded a "Society for the Settlement of Eretz Israel". He corresponded with prominent rabbis in Germany and Austria who gave their backing to his pamphlets.

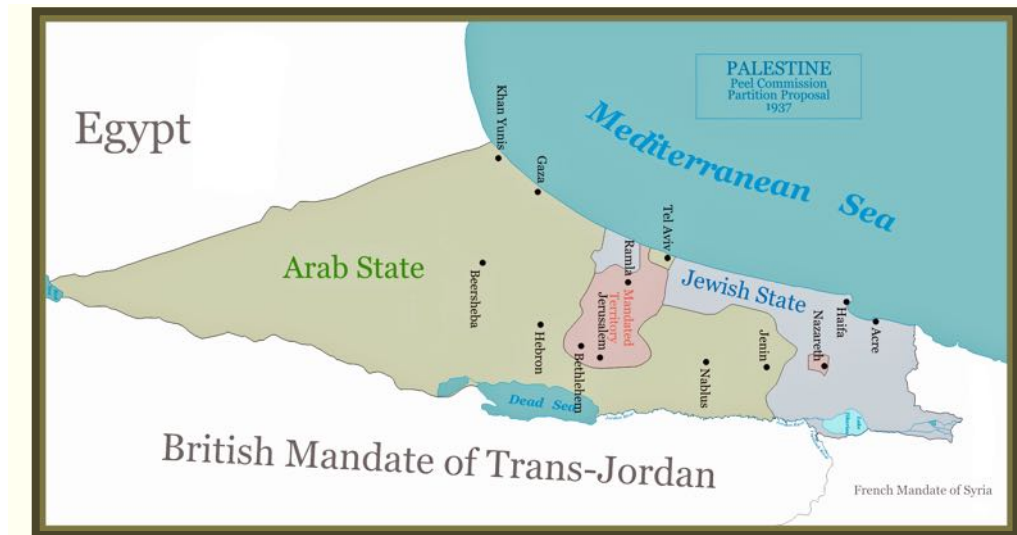
Alkalai also called for the establishment of an international Jewish association, which was realized only in 1860 with the founding of the "Alliance Israélite Universelle". He requested of this organization to help him carry out his plans. However, when, in 1870 the Alliance established the "Mikveh Israel Agricultural School" in Eretz Israel, he opposed the project, arguing that, despite the usefulness of the school in training future Jewish farmers, the only worthwhile activity was the large-scale acquisition of land for settlement purposes.

At the time his efforts brought few results, but the trickle finally made impact as exemplified by the 'halutzim' or pioneers, a term of reverence used to describe the Jewish migrants-turned-farmers. One of the foremost halutzim was Aharon David Gordon (1856-1922), a great thinker who no doubt borrowed from the ideas of Alkalai. His outlook on Jewish life has been defined as the "*the religion of labor*". He believed that salvation for the Jewish people could come about only through the efforts of the individual to change himself. Despite the opposition of his parents in law he decided in 1904 to set out alone to Eretz Israel, bringing his wife and daughter only five years later. Although he had never done physical work, he insisted on tilling the soil with his own hands. He suffered the tribulations of the pioneers: malaria, unemployment, hunger and insecurity, but he was not the man to be discouraged by it.

Source: 2nd edition of The Encyclopaedia Judaica from 2007, under both Alkalai and Bibas.

APPENDIX 6

Churchill's Testimony before the Peel Commission to examine the future of Britain's Palestine Mandate



This summary of Churchill's Testimony before the Peel Commission is taken from Volume V of the official biography "Winston S. Churchill" by Martin Gilbert (pp. 847-48). His testimony was not included in the Report because too controversial. The White Paper of 1939, which proscribed the continued settlement of Jews in Palestine, was a result of the political discussions that followed the publication of the Report.

With justice and fair consideration to those displaced...

Following the outbreak of an Arab revolt in Palestine, intended by the Palestinian Arab leaders to halt all further Jewish immigration and to bring British rule to an end, the British Government appointed a Royal Commission, headed by Lord Robert Peel, to determine the future of Britain's Palestine Mandate. Sir Winston Churchill was summoned as a witness before the commissioners on March 12th 1937. As Colonial Secretary in 1922 he had been responsible for the original administration of the Mandate for Palestine, and was closely questioned about his intentions at that time. In answer to a question from Lord Peel, he declared that the Jewish right to immigration ought not to be curtailed by the "*economic absorptive capacity*" of Palestine, and he spoke of "*the good faith of England to the Jews*". "This arose", he said:

« because we gained great advantages in the War. We did not adopt Zionism entirely out of altruistic love of starting a Zionist colony: it was a matter of great importance to this country. It was a potent factor on public opinion in America and we are bound by honour, and I think upon the merits, to push this thing as far as we can. (...) The British Government had certainly committed itself (he went on) to the idea that some day, somehow, far off in the future, subject to justice and economic convenience, there might well be a great Jewish State there, numbered by millions, far exceeding the present inhabitants of the country. (...) We never committed ourselves to making Palestine a Jewish State (...) but if more and more Jews gather to that Home and all is worked from age to age, from generation to

generation, with justice and fair consideration to those displaced and so forth, certainly it was contemplated and intended [at the time] that they might in the course of time become an overwhelmingly Jewish State. »»

"There is no such country as Palestine. 'Palestine' is a term the Zionists invented. There is no Palestine in the Bible. Our country was for centuries part of Syria. [The term] 'Palestine' is alien to us. It is the Zionists who introduced it."

Auni Bey Abdul-Hadi, Syrian Arab leader to the Peel Commission

Where the Arab goes, it is often desert

The deputy chairman of the Commission, Sir Horace Rumbold, took up the questioning. Was there not, he asked, "*harsh injustice*" to the Arabs if Palestine attracted too many Jews from outside. Churchill replied that even when the Jewish Home "*will become all Palestine*", as it eventually would, there was no injustice.

«« Why (Churchill continued) is there harsh injustice done if people come in and make a livelihood for more [people], and make the desert into palm groves and orange groves? Why is it injustice because there is more work and wealth for everybody? There is no injustice. The injustice is when those who live in the country leave it to be desert for thousands of years. »»

When Rumbold pointed out the danger to British troops of the "*periodical disturbances*" in Palestine, Churchill replied that the idea of creating a National Home for the Jews was "*the prime and dominating pledge upon which Britain must act*". If Britain became weak, "*somebody else might have to take it on*", but while Britain remained in Palestine "*that is what we are undoubtedly pledged to*". Rumbold spoke up for the Arabs, who were, he said, "*the indigenous population*", subjected in 1918 "*to the invasion of a foreign race*". Churchill objected to the phrase "*foreign race*". The Arabs, he said, had come in after the Jews. It was the "*great hordes of Islam*" who "*smashed*" Palestine up. "*You have seen the terraces on the hills which used to be cultivated*", he told Rumbold, "*which under Arab rule have remained a desert.*" Rumbold insisted that the backwardness of Palestine was the result of Turkish rule, but Churchill insisted that "*where the Arab goes it is often desert*". When Rumbold spoke of the Arab civilization in Spain, Churchill retorted: "*I am glad they were thrown out.*" It was "*for the good of the world*", he told Lord Peel a few moments later: "*that the place should be cultivated, and it never will be cultivated by the Arabs*".



Towards the end of the session, Rumbold asked Churchill when he would consider the Jewish Home to be established, and Britain's undertaking fulfilled. "*At what point?*" Rumbold asked. To which Churchill replied: "*When it was quite clear the Jewish preponderance in Palestine was very marked, decisive, and when we were satisfied that we had no further duties to discharge to the Arab population, the Arab minority.*"

The aftermath

None of Churchill's evidence was included in the Commission's Report. He was even reluctant to have it printed secretly. "*There are a few references to nationalities*", he wrote to Lord Peel on March 16, "*which would not be suited to appear in a permanent record*".

The Peel Commission recommended to partition Palestine into two separate states, one Arab and one Jewish, reserving Jerusalem and a corridor to the sea as part of a permanent British controlled enclave. Churchill opposed this decision, believing that it was a breach of Britain's pledge to the Jews, as expressed in the Balfour Declaration, to enable them to establish a Jewish Nation Home throughout the original area of the Mandate, from the Mediterranean Sea to the River Jordan.

The famous Winston Churchill picture shown above

In 1941, Churchill visited first Washington and then Ottawa. The Prime Minister, Mackenzie King, invited the famous photographer Yousuf Karsh to be present and to observe Churchill's expressions, moods, and attitudes while he addressed the Canadian Parliament.

After the electrifying speech, I waited in the Speaker's Chamber, so Yousuf Karsh tells us, where, the evening before, I had set up my lights and camera. The Prime Minister, arm-in-arm with Churchill and followed by his entourage, started to lead him into the room. I switched on my floodlights; a surprised Churchill growled: "*Wha's this, what's this?*" No one had the courage to explain. I timorously stepped forward and said: "*Sir, I hope I will be fortunate enough to make a portrait worthy of this historic occasion.*" He glanced at me and demanded: "*Why was I not told?*" When his entourage began to laugh, this hardly helped matters for me. Churchill lit a fresh cigar, puffed at it with a mischievous air, and then magnanimously relented. "*You may take one.*" But to get the giant to walk grudgingly from his corner to where my lights and camera were set up some little distance away was a feat! Churchill's cigar was ever present. I held out an ashtray, but he would not dispose of it. I went back to my camera and made sure that everything was all right technically. I waited; he continued to chomp vigorously at his cigar. I waited. Then I stepped toward him and, without premeditation, but ever so respectfully, I said, "*Forgive me, sir*", and plucked the cigar out of his mouth. By the time I got back to my camera, he looked so belligerent he could have devoured me. It was at that instant that I took the photograph. The silence was deafening. Then, Mr. Churchill, smiling benignly, said: "*You may take another one.*" He walked toward me, shook my hand, and said: "*You can even make a roaring lion stand still to be photographed.*"

Note: the original picture was black and white and has been colorized later.

APPENDIX 7

‘The Fig Tree, a Symbol of Israel’

Three trees are fit symbols of Israel, with an inter-linked symbolism. The vine is a symbol of Israel’s spiritual blessings; the olive tree of its religious blessings, and the fig tree of its national blessings. This article concentrates on the meaning of the fig tree.

Figs, the good ones and the bad, are identified with the prosperity or misfortune of the people of Israel, as exemplified by the prophet Jeremiah. He received the vision of two baskets of figs: *“Like these good figs, so will I acknowledge them that are carried away captive of Judah.”* (Jer. 24:5) The fig tree also prefigures the climax of prosperity, which is reached in the Millennium Age. According to Micah 4:3-4 every man shall then sit under his own vine and fig tree. It is because of its delicious, sweet fruit (Judg. 9:11) that the fig tree is an image of prosperity and security: *“...and Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig tree.”* (1 Kings 4:5) The Jewish sages identify ‘honey’ in the passage of *“a land flowing with milk and honey”* with the honey of figs. (Ket. 111b) The consensus of the classical rabbinic literature is that the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was a fig tree. (Encycl. Jud. 2nd ed.) And of course it was from its leaves that Adam and Eve covered their nakedness. The fig tree is thus also a symbol of Paradise restored when its fruits, then, may be eaten.



One of the Lord’s most intriguing miracles was the cursing of the fig tree. When the end of our Lord’s mission was approaching He returned from Bethany. The Master approached a fig tree and looked for fruit in it. Having found none, He passed this sentence: *“Let no fruit grow on thee henceforth for ever!”* (Mt. 21:19) The next day it had withered. This is remarkable because of a note made by the author of the Gospel of Mark that *“The time for figs was not yet.”* (Mark 11:13) This is the only miracle in which Jesus used his power to destroy, instead of to heal. This miracle must be considered in the light of the parable of the barren fig tree:

«« A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard: *“Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?”* And he answered: *“Let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it and dung it. And if it shall bear fruit, well and if not then after that thou shalt cut it down.”* »» (Luc. 13:6-9)

The parable was preceded by: *“Except ye repent ye shall likewise perish.”* The parable is quite obvious: The owner of the vineyard is the God of Israel and the vineyard is an image of Israël. (Is. 5:7) The dresser is the Messiah, who, three years into his mission, would, through digging and fertilizing, tried to make the nation bring fruit unto God in their acknowledgement of Yeshua Messiah. At the time the fate of the nation was undecided. The work was unfinished. There was still some time of dressing work left. It looks as if the cursing was the finishing of the unfinished parable. It should be observed that this parable was uttered the same days when the tree was cursed. Therefore, it would be difficult to assume that when Christ insisted to watch for signs taking place on that kind of a tree, that it was merely accidental. These two things constitute a whole.



***The sack of Jerusalem, Roman soldiers taking the sacred articles from the Temple.
(on display on the inside wall of the Arch of Titus in Rome)***

How soon was Christ's prophecy to be fulfilled about the withering of the fig tree? At the end of the Book of Acts, Paul's mission to the Jews and Gentiles comes to an end, which is commonly placed in the early sixties. Henceforth he will be the apostle to the Gentiles only. Then, in the year 70 AD the Temple is destroyed. No longer is there a place to offer sacrifices. The Law in its original form could not be followed any more, because the only place of sacrifice being allowed is Jerusalem. However, the constitutional position of the Jewish people, after that war, remained essentially unchanged. This also was going to change when at suppression of the Bar Kochba revolt, a generation later, the whole country was depopulated.

Speaking about the time of his kingdom approaching, the kingdom of the thousand years reign, Christ again turns his disciples' attention to the fig tree: *"Now learn a parable of the fig tree: When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth his leaves, ye know that summer is nigh. So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the door."* (Mt. 24:32-33)

As a result of the rejection of the Messiah on the part of the Jews, at his first advent, God's favor turned away from them. Unfortunately, this also meant that the Millennium Reign was postponed. The softening of the branches and the bringing forth of leaves represent the return of God's favor to this people, which two thousand years later settled again on the mountains of Israel. Who could have foreseen that it would take so long? This means that the time of the establishment of God's Kingdom on earth and Christ's second coming are near. Let us, then, carefully observe this symbolic 'fig tree'!



APPENDIX 8

‘Miracles are Happening in Israel’

Account of the Gaza War, 27th Dec. 2008 - 21st Jan. 2009



Internet article, slightly editorialised, from a Jewish-Christian community:
The Father's Heart Mission, in Haifa, Israël.

This article is by an exceptional woman who wishes to remain anonymous. She lives in Israel and wishes to share this wonderful witness with you. It is about God's intervention in the recent Gaza War, showing that in the heat of battle God looks out for His people. He is and remains a God of miracles.

Heavenly bulletproof jackets

While the Western media blamed Israel for killing women and children and imposed on their viewers terrible photos of war, Israel underwent an amazing spiritual awakening. A pity that the press there paid no attention to it. Even the greatest sceptic would have been convinced by the story of the change that came over the people of Israel in this historic land. After having played the part of the underdog for years – bowing to every whim of the international community – during this war Israel experienced a strong spiritual awakening on both an individual and a national level. Israel is henceforth determined to ignore the approval or disapproval of the concert of nations. The country wishes to exercise its sovereign right to protect its citizens if required from terror attacks.

For those familiar with the Jews and the situation in Israel it is astonishing that no fewer than 92% of the Jews resident in Israel were of the opinion that the Gaza War was necessary and justified. The popular saying: “Two Jews, three opinions and four political parties” was no longer valid in view of the national crisis. Not only was there massive

unity of opinion, but even the political left and right were in agreement. Even more surprising was the unity seen between the various religious groupings: Ashkenazis, Sephardis, Reform Jews and conservatives, Zionists and anti-Zionists. They were all united in a broad front of prayer to beg the Almighty for his blessings. Everywhere the call to prayer was heard and everyone gave heed to it, no matter what their belief or ethnic background. They called on the God of Israel to protect their soldiers and to grant them an overwhelming victory over their sly enemy, who had sworn to stop fighting only when Israel had been destroyed as a nation and as a people.

The soldiers demonstrated a huge spiritual hunger. Not only did they wish to be prayed for but they also prayed themselves. They wore tzitzit (prayer tassels) on their uniforms and carried the Book of Psalms with them. The rabbis called the tzitzit “heavenly bulletproof jackets”! Emergency tents on enemy territory serving as synagogues had no fewer than ten morning prayer services. It is said that soldiers who had never before attended a prayer service now prayed along with the rest wearing their tefillin (prayer belts). They felt the need for God. Everyone knew that the Hamas warriors, with their excellent training and refusal to spare anyone, had been able to prepare for years with the setting up of ambushes and the laying of booby traps. And everyone was aware of the fact that Hamas felt an enormous urge to kill, injure or capture Israelis, an urge fed by a hatred greater than the desire to remain alive themselves. They had obtained weapons and logistical help from Iran and had received a great deal of assistance from Syria and from the Hezbollah (the paramilitary organisation established in Lebanon). Despite all of this, they were unable to boast of a single military achievement that was a source of humiliation for Israel. In total approximately 1,300 Palestinians were killed, including many Hamas fighters – who were often disguised as civilians – but on the Israeli side only 13 soldiers fell, and that may indeed be regarded as the greatest miracle.

God's Hand was clearly visible

During the war there were daily reports of miraculous occurrences in which God's helping hand could be discerned. Thus a Hamas map was discovered ‘by accident’ showing the exact location of booby traps, landmines and sniper locations. Thanks to this essential information the army was able to take appropriate measures, thereby sparing many lives. It also happened that a platoon of soldiers camping in a school failed to realise that the building was full of booby traps. A soldier ‘happened’ to discover this during a nocturnal visit to the toilet. All the traps were rendered useless. Another example: a soldier attacked a number of Hamas fighters on his own when they attempted to drag him into a tunnel. He took all of them captive!



Primed explosives were found in hundreds of tunnels, under beds and in kitchen cupboards in dwellings... and yet they did not explode when the Israeli soldiers searched the rooms, much to the surprise of the Hamas fighters, who did not understand how this could be possible. Sometimes there were accidents, but even then God's hand was recognisable. A young man, for instance, who had come from England two years earlier to serve in the Israeli army, was thrown into the air by an explosion. After being carried by soldiers, they placed him on a tractor for transportation. He was then flown by helicopter to hospital where the doctors – to

their amazement – found a piece of shrapnel embedded in his neck that had missed the artery and spinal column. Once the shrapnel had been removed all that was needed was a few stitches to close the wound. Another soldier was shot in the back. The bullet missed his spine and left the front of his body without touching any vital organs. There was also the case of a young soldier who, though seriously wounded, healed in an inexplicable manner, after which he was allowed to return home to his wife.

In Israel itself the Hamas rockets continued to rain down during the conflict, but here too we can speak of miraculous salvation. The word ‘nes’ (miracle) was often heard from the mouths of local reporters and citizens. Thus a rocket flew close to an apartment block, dropped into a sewage pipe and exploded underground. There was some damage but above ground everything remained safe. An elderly lady who was sitting in her apartment when it was totally destroyed by a rocket walked out with just a few scratches on her ankle. One day the Mayor of Beersheba felt himself constrained to close a particular school. Shortly afterwards the infants’ school was destroyed by a direct hit... There is also the following story: the dormitory of an old people’s home in Nahariya was destroyed by a rocket while everyone was at breakfast so that nobody was wounded. And everyone knows the story of the man who fled from his car with his little daughter as soon as the sirens sounded. After having sought shelter, he saw his car explode due to a direct hit. Interviewed on television he repeated constantly what a miracle it had been!

Similar stories were also told during the Second Lebanon War, then two years earlier. They were transmitted on Israeli radio and television but were totally ignored in Europe. The Western news services preferred to transmit only the negative propaganda that they heard from the terrorists and the Muslim media, put out with the aim of placing Israel in a bad light.

Biblical times live again

The people in Israel regret the destruction caused in the Gaza Strip. They also think of the consequent terrible human tragedies. And yet the responsibility for the deaths and destruction rests squarely on the shoulders of the Hamas leaders. These misled people think that their god, Allah, will deliver victory to them. In fact they are fighting the true God, the God of



Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. That is a fight they can never win. We are now reliving Biblical times, such as when God told the prophet Elisha the plans of the attacking enemies, and the enemies wondered if there was perhaps a spy in their midst.

Hope reigns in the Israeli ranks, not despair, and a united readiness to arrive at a solution. Even the parents of Yoni Natanael who was fired at due to a mistake on the part of the Israeli army, said that their son died “*for the glory of God’s Name (Hashem)*”. They forgave and blessed the military who had shot at their own unit. There is such heroism and bravery that people would love to show it to the world. One of our journalists expressed it in its essence: “*The news media left their brains at the gate of Ben Gurion airport.*” They are miles away from the conflict zone, wear bulletproof jackets and helmets when in front of the camera – and take them off later when they are enjoying a cup of coffee in the nearby café!

Fortunately Israelis are used to being ignored or misunderstood by the rest of the world. Everyone knows that there is a job to be done. People are more and more convinced that there is a higher power than themselves, a Power that defends them. They also feel called to be the “Light of the Nations”. Israel has learned the lesson of the failed Lebanon War in July-August 2006.

The struggle in Gaza against terrorism and the continual rocket attacks was well prepared. The message that Hamas is out to destroy Israel was not misunderstood. Hitler too let everyone know beforehand what his plan was. And then too the world did not want to listen. Surely people have not forgotten this?

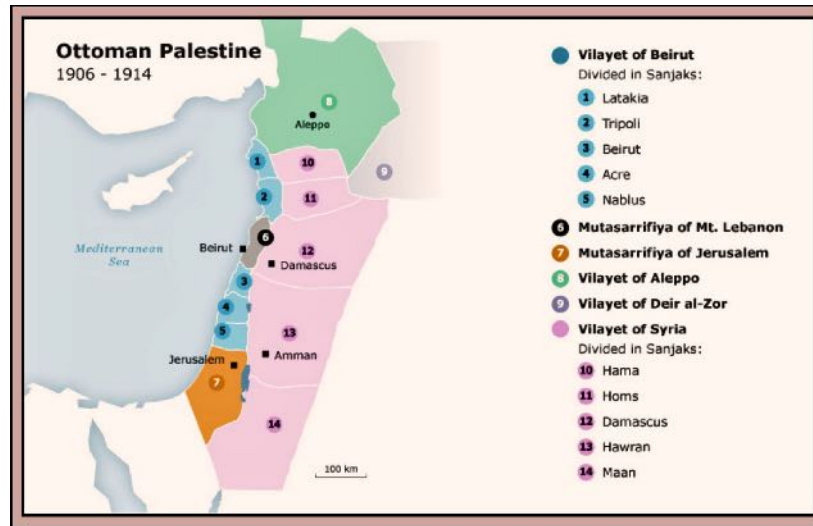
In contrast to what the international Press and the major politicians say, with their heads in the sand and their talk of political correctness, Israel is not the bad guy. In the terrible struggle that rages between the powers of darkness and of light there is a good and a bad side. Fortunately in God we have a saviour who neither slumbers nor sleeps but takes up the defence of Israel and comes to the aid of his people when they beg Him. The rest of the world misses the reality of a just God who listens to their humble prayer and defends his own: *“If My people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from Heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.”* (2 Chr. 7,14)

Remark by Hubert Luns: Most of the media put the number of fatalities among Gaza citizens at around 1,300. This figure was published by Hamas and was subsequently adopted by the UN and Red Cross. The official number of dead currently stands at 1,330. But according to the Italian reporter Lorenzo Cremonesi, who works for the authoritative newspaper “Corriere della Sera” and was in Gaza during the war, the figure is grossly exaggerated. He estimates that between 500 and 600 Gazans were killed. He came to this conclusion after visiting the hospitals in Gaza during the fighting. Cremonesi noted that in almost all the large hospitals in Gaza, especially those in the major areas of conflict, many beds were empty. On top of that, Cremonesi reported that a doctor at Gaza City’s Shifa Hospital confirmed his suspicions, while asking to remain anonymous for fear of Hamas. The doctor also said that many of the dead Palestinians were *“youths between the ages of 17 to 23, who were recruited to the ranks of Hamas and were then sent to the slaughter.”*

APPENDIX 9

LOOKING BACK ON PROPERTY RIGHTS IN ISRAEL

In 2018, on the occasion of “Israel 70 Years”, Israel Today published a contribution by historian Tsvi Sadan on the legal property rights of the land now called Israel, in light of the accusation that the current inhabitants of Israel would have confiscated the property of the original inhabitants. Portions of his contribution are quoted here literally, translated back from an article in Dutch.



According to her enemies, the State of Israel occupies a land that does not belong to her. In 1948, according to the Palestinian narrative, only 5 percent of the land was owned by Jews [in reality double that number], and thus 95 percent would be owned by Arabs. But this story is wrong because landownership does not equate to sovereignty. Landownership is always subject to the laws of the sovereign state that governs the land. And since there has never been a Palestinian sovereign state, the issue of privately-owned land in terms of sovereign rights is irrelevant to the whole discussion of the Palestinians claiming ‘their land’. All that matters are the property rights on personal title before the British were assigned the Mandate by the League of Nations. What has happened since then also has to be reckoned with. We will now look at who is entitled to what, within the framework of the most recent past.

Nevertheless, to clarify things, privately-owned land became an option only after the 1858 Turkish Land Registry Law came into effect. As a matter of fact, before the British mandate period, the Palestinian region was subject to the Ottoman (or Turkish) law. After 1858, for the first time people could have their land registered as private property. Until then, no individual had any official deeds to prove ownership of any piece of land.

The Ottomans divided the country, now called the State of Israel, into so-called Vilayets and Mutasarrifiyas. Vilayets, if required, were again subdivided into Sanjaks, ruled by the Sanjak-Bey, a kind of governor. The administrators of these regions were responsible for the military and administrative affairs. Within this system, the Ottoman sovereign alone dictated the conditions of landownership and, of course, of much more things.

In the November 1917 Balfour Declaration, the British government supported the establishment of a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine. Just a month later Jerusalem was occupied by the British, which marked the end of Ottoman rule and the beginning of British power. Because the Balfour Declaration gave the land under British rule only a temporary status, the British enforced the laws on the use of the lands as the

Ottoman power had arranged. Thus they inherited their land division system. Even the Turkish names for property or usage rights were adopted by the British. Thus the Ottoman Vilayets and Mutasarrifiyas fell under the British Mandate over Palestine.

Under Ottoman law, the country was divided into different land categories, some of which I will mention here. In addition to the administrative units, private property was recognized, the so-called mulk land. According to estimates, this covered no more than 2% of the entire country. Owners were the Islamic Waqf, private companies and also a number of Christian churches. To date, the Greek Orthodox Church is the largest non-Jewish landowner in Israel. It is currently very difficult for non-Jews to obtain land in Israel and even Jews have difficulty with that, because most of it belongs to the State of Israel and it sets strict rules for the transfer of landownership.

Before the Jews started to cultivate the barren land, only half of the land was classified as fertile (miri) by the Ottomans. In the Ottoman era much of this land lay fallow; it was not worked (mawat). If an individual wanted to cultivate this land, it was permitted to do so, but the farmer could not actually become the owner of the land. Miriland could be rented to make the land fertile. The tenant then had to pay 10% of the proceeds and was also obliged to participate in the military defense of the country. This led to widespread fraud to avoid the obligations. That is why many miriland were registered as uncultivated mawatland.

In the Ottoman Empire, many matters were regulated outside of the law. As a result, the British inherited a chaotic system, where official documents were scarce or very unreliable. The most reliable records of landownership were Jewish property. The chaotic state of property rights was exploited in the increasingly anti-Zionist British rule, leading to entire areas being handed over by the British to Arab peasants.

In the 1940s, the British government declared that 45% of the cultivated land in the Mandatory Palestine was Arab land. But this figure was not based on the official registration of miriland that belonged to Arabs. The British government simply decided to view land that they believed might be cultivated by Arabs as Arab land. This exaggerated figure fitted well with the British policy of strongly opposing Jewish immigration. This was done in violation of the advocated principles of the Balfour Declaration and also contradicted the public statements of the British Government. They said one thing but did another.

Since the first wave of Jewish immigration in 1882, Jews had bought land at often sky-high prices. This was such an important aspect that even Jewish children donated their pocket money for this purpose. Despite the many obstacles the Jews encountered in their attempts to buy land, they were still able to buy up small plots of land here and there, scattered all over the country. But in 1948 this was no more than 15% of the mandate region. And almost all of this land became the property of the Jewish National Fund. Of these lands, 10% was situated within the Green Line, 4% in Gaza and 1% in the West Bank. Investigations showed that up to 20% [not 45%] of the mandate area was privately owned by non-Jews, mainly Arabs.

In the aftermath of the 1948 War of Independence, the State of Israel gained sovereignty over most of the mandated territory known as the Green Line. Jordan then gained control of the West Bank and Egypt took control of the Gaza Strip. Israel nationalized the mirilands left behind by the Arabs, and through their departure thus became mawatlands. Stirring radio messages from the Arab countries during the war of '48 caused 700,000 Arabs to flee the country. With few exceptions, land that had become private property of Arabs during the British Mandate remained in the hands of these people provided they had not fled the country. When Israel recognized the Green Line at the time of the Armistice in '49, it gained not only formal but de facto sovereignty over the land that from ancient times belonged to the Jewish people.

Israel surrounded by the Arabs *- They believe to have the right to a pinprick of land -*

by G.B.J. Hiltermann, a Dutch political commentator and historian (1914-2000); from “Collected Notes from Journeys and Home” - 1974
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On 12th October 1969, in his Sunday radio programme “De toestand in de wereld” (The World Situation), which attracted a great many listeners, Hiltermann called the national daily, De Volkskrant “*frankly antisemitic – or at least anti-Israel*”. The newspaper sued him for libel. After the newspaper had lost a preliminary summary procedure, it was decided during an ordinary court case that Hiltermann had to withdraw his allegation, which he did publicly. At the newspaper’s request the Netherlands Press Council dealt with the case again and after a year of deliberations declared the complaint groundless. Hiltermann’s comment on this was: “*The most prepared, the most qualified, the only truly expert institute, the Press Council, took my side.*”

In 2008, a similar trial took place because of the imminent publication of a satirical letter “Balkenende’s Secret Speech”. It contained an alleged speech given by Dutch Prime Minister Balkenende during a secret meeting with thirty prominent figures of his party, in which a comparison was drawn between Islam and Christianity and in which Islam was qualified as a problem. This caused the Prime Minister to take out an injunction against *Opinio*, with the Dutch State demanding on pain of fines the withdrawal of the text and the publication of a rectification. The judge ruled that the article, written by editor Jaffe Vink, was obviously an invention designed to caricature the (lack of) controversy and to act as a provocation. The judgment stated literally: “*In so far as this is a critical treatment of Mr. Balkenende, it is something that he, as Prime Minister and leader of the Christian Democrat party, will have to put up with.*” At the time, one of the employees of *Opinio* was the well-known politician Ayaan Hirsi Ali of Somali origin, who caused a lot of dust to blow up because of her unsalted criticism about certain Islamic views.

In 1974, after the Yom Kippur War of October 1973, he commented on the affair in his series of publications “Verzamelde Notities” (Collected Notes), in which the born Catholic Hiltermann took a sublime look at the history of the birth of the modern State of Israel. It is this that draws our attention. (In order to make it more readable, parts omitted from this considerably abbreviated text are not indicated.)

4.19 – Why did the Newspaper Rush to the Kadi?

The court cases that De Volkskrant initiated against me in 1969 touch on some fundamental questions with regard to Israel's right to existence and the nature of antisemitism. It all started - to recall the beginning - when, during a radio programme, I dared to express my astonishment regarding the slovenly, partial and sometimes frankly wrong reporting in De Volkskrant regarding events in the Near East (about the war of attrition being waged against Israel by Egypt and the PLO). A report of this kind in the newspaper's Saturday edition caused me to make the following remark in my radio programme on Sunday morning: "...that *"De Volkskrant" has become the plaintiff for Communism to such a extent that this Catholic newspaper has become frankly antisemitic, or at least anti-Israel, and on this point provides information that is entirely false...*"

The reaction of this originally Roman Catholic newspaper was remarkable. It took no offence at the accusation of being pro-Communism. The accusation that it was providing its readers with false information left it cold. It objected only to the accusation of being *"antisemitic"*. And that despite the inseparable addition of *"or at least anti-Israel"*. And the most remarkable thing was that the newspaper immediately ran to all available judges. Why did the newspaper rush to the kadi?⁴⁶ Newspapers seldom call on the aid of the courts. Daily newspapers - and other mass media - generally see to their own affairs. Certainly when it comes to mutual differences. The remarkable thing, the characteristic, of the mass media is that they can turn to one another and attack one another in full publicity - 'coram populo'. The verdict is spoken by a jury of hundreds of thousands of readers and listeners. A manufacturer of washing powder, who cannot directly defend himself against what a newspaper or radio programme says about him, seeks out a judge. Why then should a newspaper with a reasonable readership turn against a speaker on the radio with a considerable number of listeners via the narrow hearing apparatus and mouthpiece of a trial?

If "De Volkskrant" had challenged me to a polemic in which I should either prove the truth of my statement or explain it, I would not have hesitated to recognise that I did not intend to qualify the newspaper as 'antisemitic in the Hitlerian sense of the word'. With my inseparable characterisation of *"antisemitic, at least anti-Israel"*, I meant that the newspaper gave reason to seriously suspect it of antisemitic feelings, and if that could not be proven or if it could be shown to be far from the truth, then at least it had an exorbitantly hostile attitude towards Israel.

It seems advisable to me to use a separate qualification for the criminal antisemitism of a Hitler, and not to oblige ourselves to ban the word antisemitism because of the memory of concentration camps and gas chambers. If we were not allowed to use the word any longer then we would in fact be protecting the antisemitism that still exists. We would force opponents to use euphemisms. We would hardly be able to expose it any more. It is thus more sensible to assume that not everyone who uses the term antisemitism means the pathological, criminal, rabid destruction of Jews as practised by Adolf Hitler and Julius Streicher.

There is another form of antisemitism. There are people, as Professor Philip Kohnstamm, among others, wrote in his magnificent analysis "The psychology of antisemitism", of them who do not like Jews. Some frankly proclaim it. There are those for whom the Jewish accent is unpleasant or who object to the Jewish appearance and sometimes even the Jewish way of doing things - or whatever. This is permitted - or at least not forbidden. But anyone who thinks that way *"doesn't like them and is against the Jews, is already*

46) A kadi is a judge who presides at an Islamic court, as is customary in Indonesia, which used to be a Dutch colony.

an antisemite, one whom we should be allowed so to name without being punished for doing so". That does not, however, mean that he is accused of criminal and active antisemitism, nor even that he strives to limit Jewish influence in society.

However no polemics took place. Only the small group of those who read the court proceedings took cognisance of my remarks following on some statements made by my opponents. There is then - to start with - the "Israel is a state like any other" theory. Why should it not be right to express criticism of Israel? Why should we have to handle Israel with kid gloves? Israel is, after all - and wants to be - a normal state. I would suggest that this first - apparently undeniable - simplification is not valid in general, because there is no such thing as a normal state. Every state is a piece of regulated society. With civil servants, and therefore bureaucrats, awkward customs officials, disagreeable policemen, terrible taxes and so on... But if we are talking about essentials, every state is - still - a sacrosanct institution and even its name carries strong emotional overtones. Almost all states are the highest individual collective expression of illusions and longings, of the potential and history of its people. When he speaks of "La France" a Frenchman thinks of something different than does an American talking about "the States".

4.20 – Israel is not a state like 'any other'

Every state somewhat resembles an artwork. States can inspire people to hefty outpourings - and still can. No wonder that Providence was long considered the only founder of states. A state cannot be compared with an association representing the interests of its members. Secular states do not exist, at least not for long. This applies all the more so to Israel. For more than one reason! The first is that this is an exceptional nation. The Jewish people are not the only ones who have managed for centuries to remain in existence without having their own state. That applies also to the Basques, the Druses, the Kurds – and perhaps we should also reckon the Armenians and Lithuanians in this group. However, none of these peoples were scattered. Only the Jewish people were scattered all over the world – as a people in time, as the Spanish diplomat Salvador de Madariaga once said – and yet succeeded to maintain its special characteristics and properties.

Moreover the Jewish people have made a fundamental contribution to the foundation of the culture in which we still live. The Christian faith, Christian ethics and the history of Christian churches and their influence on the affairs of the European cultural area cannot be understood without knowledge of the Jewish contribution to the emergence of Christianity. Even now, when Christian beliefs and Christian ethics are undergoing a thorough process of reappraisal, a study of the spiritual contribution of the Jewish people as the basis of our civilization is required. Unlike other nations, the Jews also continue to produce thinkers who contribute to our spiritual wealth. Their theological researchers further explored the antiquity of their religion, which has strongly marked our culture. Old scrolls, found in the Holy Land, which our eyes also focus on if we want to reflect on the origins of our culture, have further enriched our understanding.

Jews have continued to make important contributions to new philosophies – along the lines of Hasidism and through Martin Buber and Henri Bergson, to the personalism and existentialism of our era. It is characteristic of the Jewish talent, the Jewish-Dutch scientist Henri Prague has said in a convincing presentation, to make a direct link between the individual self and the greatness of the universe, whether it be God, another person or a thing. The Jews have always excelled in making this direct relationship. Which is why its people are a people unlike any other and their state too, an aspect that was again stressed during World War II.

But much more startling than what happened then, we should call the creation of the State of Israel, witnessing to an unimaginable will to live and to the vitality of that

ancient and persecuted people, that always focused on mental activity with a vitality that we can only perceive in primitives, freeing itself from the ruins of the Second World War and turning the state of Israel into a viable entity. We can therefore safely say: Israel too is a state. But that does not mean it is a state like any other! In the same sense, on October 21st 1969 there was a headline to an editorial in the liberal daily “De Nieuwe Rotterdamse Courant” under the heading: “A State with a background”. With a background indeed.

4.21 – The official Arab Position: Israel must be Destroyed

An important point in the Israeli problem is that here the maxim “audi et alteram partem” - let us also hear the other side - is to be fully respected. Undoubtedly, after the Second World War the Dutch showed little interest in the Arab world. Nor did the Arabs make it any easier for us. Their states supplied little information. Access was made difficult for travellers. Representatives of the mass media, radio and television, were often denied access, or their work was made impossible. The old links faded. The number of Arab experts in the Netherlands decreased. No more candidates came forward for the Leiden University chair that the Orientalist Snouck Hurgronje had made world famous and no more candidates applied for administrative positions in the Muslim Dutch East Indies. From their midst our diplomatic representative in Jeddah was usually chosen to oversee the welfare of thousands of pilgrims annually going from Indonesia to Mecca, and Indonesia gives home to the largest Muslim population in the world.

The Arabs and we are estranged. Both have failed. To the disadvantage of both parties. This has undoubtedly influenced our attitude towards the Israeli-Arab conflict. Not, however, as regards the main concern. Whoever says that we have little investigated the position of the other party suggests that many have succumbed to an excessive affection for Israel, many of them inspired by feelings of admiration, pity and guilt. Thus it would also be that the reasonable convictions of the Arabs deserve our attention.

The reasoning may seem logical, but it makes it - wrongly - appear that an Arab position has always existed with regard to Israel. As if there were an Israeli view to which an Arab view could be compared! And that it would be Israel's contempt for the Arab position that would make a solution to the dispute difficult to find. Until the Yom Kippur war of October 1973 this was certainly not the case (Hiltermann wrote in 1974). For the Arab position until the last round of the war was simple and absolute: “We do not want Israel. No, no and no again !!”

Whenever someone accepts Israel's existence as a fact, his understanding of that Arab position becomes impossible. The State of Israel must be destroyed - that was the official position. At the summit of Arab leaders in Khartoum, after the defeat of the Arabs in the Six Day War in 1967, that point of view was again deliberately and emphatically reiterated. Thrice **NO** – no recognition, no negotiations, no peace – was once again the Arab policy. Only briefly, during the last months of the life of the Egyptian leader Gamal Abdel Nasser (who died in September 1970), did it seem as if at least two Arab countries, the United Arab Republic and Jordan, were willing to accept the ‘fact’ of Israel's existence. But then no shape was given to this apparent willingness. Reluctantly, the position of Khartoum during the Geneva conference, immediately following the Yom Kippur war, was somewhat abandoned, indicating a possibility of a reversal.⁴⁷⁾

47) When Hiltermann wrote his piece, the Rabat Conference in October 1974 between the Arab leaders had not yet taken place. In the final communiqué of this conference the moderate position was buried and the old argument was reiterated: that the conflict would continue until Israel's destruction had been achieved.

The leap from the burning house or the jump from a sinking ship

“How is it possible to not embrace Zionism?” they ask, “if one recognises the State of Israel as an historic necessity?” wrote Isaac Deutscher in 1954: «« What a Difficult and painful question to answer! From a burning or sinking ship people jump no matter where – on to a lifeboat, a raft, or a float. The jumping is for them an ‘historic necessity’, and the raft is in a sense the basis of their whole existence. But does it follow that the jumping should be made into a programme, or that one should take a raft-State as the basis of a political orientation? »»

After the Six-Day War of 1967 Deutscher demanded that Israel withdraw from the Occupied Territories (the Sinai, the Gaza Strip, Golan, Judea and Samaria). In an interview given to the New Left Review on the second Friday after the war, he stated: «« A man once jumped from the top floor of a burning house in which many members of his family had already perished. He managed to save his life; but as he was falling he hit a person standing down below and broke that person's legs and arms. The jumping man had no choice; yet to the man with the broken limbs he was the cause of his misfortune. (...) You will, I am sure, recognise yourselves – I said to my Israeli audience, the remnants of European Jewry in Israel – in the man who jumped from the blazing house. The other character represents, of course, the Palestine Arabs, more than a million of them, who have lost their lands and their homes. They are resentful; they gaze from across the frontiers on their old native places; they raid you stealthily and swear revenge. You punch and kick them mercilessly; you have shown that you know how to do it. But what is the sense of it? And what is the prospect? The responsibility for the tragedy of European Jews, for Auschwitz, Majdanek, and the slaughters in the ghetto, rests entirely on our own western bourgeois ‘civilization’, of which Nazism was the legitimate, even though degenerate, offspring. Yet it was the Arabs who were made to pay the price for the crimes the West committed towards the Jews. They are still made to pay it, for the ‘guilty conscience’ of the West is, of course, pro-Israeli and anti-Arab. And how easily Israel had allowed itself to be bribed and fooled by the false ‘conscience money’. »»

Source: “The Non-Jewish Jew and other essays” by Isaac Deutscher – Oxford University Press # 1968 (pp. 112, 136-37).

4.22 – Not Germany but Russia, gave Impetus to the Aliyah (return)

Nevertheless, showing understanding for the Arab position up to the end of 1973 also meant showing understanding for the view that Israel as a nation cannot and should not exist. Therefore many, willing to support the Arab case, spread views on the creation of Israel that take away the latter's simple right to exist. One of these was Isaac Deutscher, a British journalist with a Polish-Jewish background and inventor of the parable of the jump from a burning house into someone else's garden, thereby breaking your neighbour's leg! This parable suggests that Israel owes its existence to the criminal antisemitism of Adolf Hitler and that the Jews jumped from the burning Nazi house into an Arab garden, which they took by force from the original owner. Superficial listeners, unaware of Israel's history, may see this story as believable. I have to disappoint them. It is not even a simplification that has some leeway: it is an outright falsification in violation of the actual historical developments. For it was not the German antisemites, who called themselves National Socialists, that gave the impetus leading to the creation of a Jewish settlement in Israel, nor were they the ones who set in motion the proclamation of a Jewish state. No, it was Israel's current mortal enemies, the Russians, who caused the Jewish colony, that is now Israel, to come into existence. The pogroms in Russia from 1881-1884, looked upon by the civilised world with horror and dismay, caused many Jews to decide to devote their lives to finding a better home for the persecuted people. Leading Russian advocates for Jewish assimilation, such as the famous

physician Leon Pinsker in Odessa, deeply affected by the pogroms, saw the futility of their struggle for emancipation. From the Russia of the Tsars the first settlers turned back to the land of their ancestors, to the Promised Land, in a movement called the 'aliyah' (literally: the act of going up).

So no jumping from a burning house and not into anyone's garden. Only after much hesitation was it decided to build the Jewish house in Palestine, which was still under Turkish rule, and at the time generally regarded as part of Syria. That would not have been decided at the time, had it not been shown that Palestine was virtually depopulated. Around the year 1850 the land had less than 200,000 inhabitants. In the Negev Desert wandering nomads and robbers undertook raids in the surrounding area. Reliable information on this subject - from non-Jewish sources - can be found, inter alia, in a report of the United States Consul T.G. Wilson of October 1881. Returning from a reconnaissance trip he reported that the plains were empty and neglected. In Jaffa no more than a hundred poverty-stricken families survived in huts together with their cattle. In his "Recollections of Travels in the East" (1830), John Carnet describes the inhabitants of Palestine as fearful and apathetic primitives (barbarians). The agricultural population suffered from malaria and the eye disease trachoma. In 1850 Haifa, the country's second largest city after Jerusalem, had about four thousand inhabitants. This information can be found in the book "Palestine Land of Promise" by Walter Clay Lowdermilk (1944),⁴⁸⁾ and it is repeated in "Israel" (1949) by Jozeph Milkman.⁴⁹⁾

So it was not in someone else's garden, but in an almost deserted region that the settlers came. After having been eroded by the felling of trees, it was abandoned by the large landowners. This ravaged area seemed so unpromising that the Jewish agency often argued against settlement in Palestine, because the colonists, it was thought, would perhaps not be able to make the wasted lands fruitful once more.

4.23 – Not a Jump into 'someone else's garden'

Is Palestine an Arab region? – what is more: is it a 'sacred' Arab region? It is difficult to condemn someone else's declaration that a particular place is sacred. The so-called Holy Land is undoubtedly a holy place for the Jews. The significance of Jerusalem for Christianity is less, but it exists nonetheless. Why the Arabs called the city "the noble sanctuary" (al-Quds al-Sharif) is more difficult for us to understand. In my opinion the holiest places of Islam are in the Hijaz (Western Arabia). I can understand that the seats of the dynasties of the great caliphs are revered. But the Arab inclination towards Jerusalem seems frankly a bit odd to me – unless the country is revered as the home of the Jewish holy prophets because they are thought to have announced the revelation of Mohammed. But that is not exclusive: as the home of the prophets the land is holy for all of us. Why it is assumed that precisely from Jerusalem Mohammed ascended to heaven on a stairway of light is not easy for me to accept. But I have no right to reject this view.

48) In 1938 and 1939, Walter C. Lowdermilk, an assistant chief of the US Soil Conservation Service, made an 18-month tour of Western Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East to study problems of soil erosion and land use. The research was done by his organization at the request of a congressional committee. The main objective was to gain information in the interest of soil conservation in the United States. "Palestine, Land of Promise" expresses Lowdermilk's personal point of view and not necessarily that of the US Soil Conservation Service (published by Victor Gollancz Ltd, London – 1944; references pp. 60-61, 114).

49) Jozeph Melkman, a Dutchman, changed his name to Joseph Michman after settling in Israel. In 1957 he was elected chairman of the Yad Vashem Holocaust Remembrance Institute. He died in early 2009. His son, Professor Dan Michman was made chief historian of the Israel Finkler Institute for Holocaust Research in 1983.

However, I do think that I can conclude that the linking of Islam to Jerusalem should not be valued any more highly than that of Jews or Christians to that city, so that internationalisation of the holy places should be sought as a solution.

Furthermore, I find it difficult to speak with much conviction of someone else's garden and Arab land, because if you wish to go back further in history, even though the Hebrews did not inhabit the land from the time of the creation of the earth, they 'did' live there long before the flood of Arabs arrived there in the 7th and 8th centuries AD. And Jews have always lived there since then: continuously since classical times there were Jewish colonies in Jaffa, Haifa and Jerusalem.

So no wild leap into a neglected garden. Until 1948, only by purchasing did land come into Jewish hands. Not an inch was forcibly taken from the owners. Thus there may be no feelings of resentment among the Arabs because of this. How this all went is comprehensively and credibly set down in Joseph Klausner's biography of Menahem Ussishkin, the great man of the Jewish National Fund (another leader who did not quit Hitler's Third Reich, but left Russia), the son of the wealthy merchant Reb Moshe Ussishkin Zevi, who initially lived in Dubrowna in Belarus, then in Moscow and through years of pogroms was moved to Zionism. During 1920 Ussishkin began negotiating the purchase of the Jezreel Valley in Palestine. This consisted partly of swamps, where malaria mosquitoes ruled. The price was much higher than for the same land in Southern California.⁵⁰⁾ Unacceptably high many thought, but Ussishkin managed to persuade his friends to buy. No price is too high for this holy land, he argued. Moreover, we will rehabilitate the land and then it will be worth the price. That is what happened.⁵¹⁾ The influx of Jews incited some Palestinians to return and it attracted many Arab settlers, because the Jewish immigrants brought activity.⁵²⁾ Prosperity increased. Years later, after the establishment of Israel, the Palestinian refugees strongly condemned these land transactions. Their anger rightly focused more on the Arab sellers (who were often rich people from Lebanon) rather than on the Jewish buyers.

4.24 – An Arab 'state' of Palestine has 'never existed'

Not with a leap, not into anyone else's house, very definitely not into anyone else's state. An Arab state of Palestine did not exist and, indeed, has never existed, not even under a different name. The reason for this is that the Arabs were so late in amalgamating to form nations. In the course of their history they did not feel the urge to found nations as we know them. Their prophet Muhammad did not do that, nor did his immediate successors, who served as an example for what followed. During the Ottoman or Turkish rule, administrative circles did form with some central authority but no nations in the modern Western sense. The current Arab nations are young formations arising from Western initiatives. Most date from the twentieth century. The Arabs were given the opportunity

50) "Palestine, Land of Promise" by Lowdermilk (p. 112): "The Royal Commission Report" points out that Jews, because of the pressure of (Jewish) refugee needs, pay far more than the land is actually worth. I found that they paid three or four times what similar plots cost in Syria and much more than the same type of land would sell for in Southern California (in the US)."

51) As Henk Poot, a Dutch preacher and worker with "Christians for Israel", expressed it: "The land came to life once again. Nature bloomed and the birds came back. The land was once more proposed to in marriage by the sons and daughters of Israel!"

52) "Palestine, Land of Promise" by Lowdermilk (p. 110): "The cost of living in Palestine is somewhat higher than in neighbouring countries, about 8 to 10 % above that in Syria, and 12 to 15 % above that in Iraq. Since wages in Palestine are more than double those in Syria and three times as high as those in Iraq, Palestinian Arabs obviously enjoy a much higher standard of living."

- after having been liberated from Turkish rule - provided that a period of British, French, Italian or Spanish colonisation preceded the formation of the state. As for the land of Palestine, for the part now called Israel, it was only possible to turn it into a state once the former Turkish province ceased to be under British mandate.

The horrible tragedy of the non-Jewish inhabitants of the land of Israel is that they failed to assess the importance of the events. At the crucial moment they refused to participate in the new state because Jews were involved though not taking any initiative themselves, thereby failing to realise that they were missing their opportunity. In 1947 and '48 the non-Jewish inhabitants of Palestine rejected outright the mixed Jewish-Arab state, which some of their leaders were to desire so ardently a quarter of a century later.⁵³⁾

Mogen wij zeggen dat de Palestijnen met een zeker recht de Joodse rol bij de staatsvorming van de hand wezen? Werden zij met Joodse medebewoners opgescheept omdat Balfour tijdens de Eerste Wereldoorlog de vorming van een Joods nationaal tehuis in Palestina had toegezegd, daarmee de steun kopend van het internationale Jodendom in de oorlog met de Centrale Mogendheden? Mij dunkt dat de zaak dan wordt omgekeerd. De Joden gingen niet naar Palestina vanwege de Balfourverklaring, maar die verklaring werd mogelijk en nuttig omdat de Joden reeds lang naar Palestina aan het terugkeren waren. Aan de staatsvorming in Palestina namen Joden deel die sedert het einde van de negentiende eeuw naar het oude land waren weergekeerd. De Palestijnen werd ampel tijd gegund zich daarover te beraden, want de staatsvorming voltrok zich in slakkegang.

After the First World War Britain used its promise to the Jews as a pretext for governing Palestine by mandate. Britain was expected to monitor the implementation of that promise, but does not seem to have kept itself very busy.⁵⁴⁾ After World War II, to be exact on January 18, 1947, the British government announced that it could find no formula for peaceful coexistence of the Jewish part and what was called by way of convenience the Arab part. Britain saw no way of decolonising the colonised area - that is, of getting rid of its Jewish settlements.

4.25 – The Arab Rejection of the Partition Plan was the Real Cause

Since England withdrew on April 28th 1947, it became the task of the United Nations to solve the Palestine puzzle. At that time the UN enjoyed great authority. The hope of the civilised world was fixed on it. After the rough war years, when injustice and arbitrariness

53) The situation as expressed after the 1993 Oslo Accords and the accompanying Road Map turned into a fiasco. Which proves that the Arab attitude has always remained unchanged. Every gesture on the part of Israel to achieve peace, such as the transfer of the Gaza Strip in 2005, is met with a lack of will on the part of others.

54) In July 1922, the League of Nations entrusted Great Britain with the Palestine Mandate, recognizing "the historical connection of the Jewish people with Palestine". Jews and Arabs were commonly called the inhabitants of Palestine at the time, to be treated irrespective of race and religion. In the Mandate no distinction was made between what are now Palestine and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The whole region was called Palestine and treated as one, at least in the mind of readers of the resolution, of which article 5 states: "The Mandatory (Great Britain) shall be responsible for seeing that no Palestine territory shall be ceded or leased to, or in any way placed under the control of, the Government of any foreign Power." Three months later, in a move to retain control over the Suez Canal, Britain and France agreed on a deal with the Hashemite family and King Fuad of the newly independent state of Egypt. As a result, the territories east of the river Jordan were ceded, called Transjordan, which comprised 77% of the original Mandate, and also the Golan Heights. It was a backroom deal and the League of Nations just rubber-stamped it in an apparent contradiction of its own resolution.

ness ruled, the General Assembly was looked up to with great reverence as the global forum of representatives of peoples believing in law and reason and peace.

The United Nations itself was not one to come up with false promises. The organisation set up an independent commission to draw up a report. The commission visited Palestine, including Jordan, and expressed its findings and recommendations in Geneva. The majority concluded that it had to divide Palestine between Jews and Arabs. A minority proposed a federal solution. The Palestinian Arabs had boycotted the work of the commission and wanted to know nothing of its final recommendations. The commission's plan to partition Palestine was ratified by the United Nations after many deliberations. It was on the agenda from October to late November 1947. Finally came the historic decision. On Nov. 29th 1947, the General Assembly of the United Nations approved the plan with a two-thirds majority. This meant that the most authoritative body, the most representative body in international politics, had at the time voted for a division, and thus for the establishment of a Jewish state and also for the establishment of another Arab populated area. There we see how the moment could have come for the creation of what is now widely advocated: a Jewish state and an Arab state, whether federal or not. The response of the Arabs: No! I believe the Palestinian non-Jews left unused a momentous occasion in the history of humankind – at least as far as they were concerned.

Thus if the idea of creating a home in Palestine was a reaction to the Russian pogroms, the emergence of the nation was not the answer to the German gas chambers, 'but to the Arab rejection of the partition plan of the United Nations'! And whereas the UN took their major decision on Nov. 29th 1947, it was not until May 14th 1948, less than six months later, that David Ben Gurion proclaimed the Declaration of Independence for the new republic, formally called the State of Israel (מְדִינַת יִשְׂרָאֵל Medinat Yisra'el). It was the Arabs themselves who, by their uncooperative and aggressive reaction, gave the final push to the creation of the democratic republic of Israel.

The birth of the nation was cordially greeted by the world. Eleven minutes after the proclamation, President Truman approved the country de facto and not 48 hours would elapse before the Soviet Union - even de jure - recognised Israel. The new state joined the United Nations. In Dec. 1948 five of the eleven members of the Security Council (France, Britain, Canada, Belgium and China) abstained when Israel submitted its membership application; Syria voted against. In March 1949 the Council recommended acceptance; only Egypt was still against. England submitted a blank vote because Israel had made no promises about the fate of the Arab refugees and an international status for Jerusalem. In May 1949 a two-thirds majority of the General Assembly admitted Israel as the 59th member of the UN. Nevertheless the Arab world continued to deny the existence of the country. Only a quarter of a century later, from a few utterances of prominent Arab leaders at the conference in Geneva already referred to, could it be inferred that the Arab world is perhaps willing to resign itself to the existence of 'the fact of Israel'.

4.26 – The Palestinian Refugee Problem

Today (wrote Hiltermann in 1974) it has not become any easier to make acceptable arrangements for the Palestinian non-Jews, in particular for the refugees. That problem has since been overgrown by myths. Let me first state that a number of Arabs had begun to leave the mandate area before 1947. These included the wealthy landowners and the well-to-do. At the time the Arab world was - and is also largely still - very elitist and has a capitalist structure. Many, afraid of what would happen when England ceded the Mandate, took off of their own accord, without being encouraged to do so by anyone else.

This exodus swelled into a mass flight following the decision of the General Assembly to partition the country. The emerging clashes between Jewish security organizations, vigilante groups, gangs and their Arab opponents, resulted in 1948 in a joint attack on the new state by the armies of the surrounding Arab countries. When the UN ordered a ceasefire, the parties accepted and the ceasefire lines became the borders of Israel; but groups of displaced people found themselves outside the Arab region.

There is still a fierce debate over the question of who is responsible – and therefore responsible for the fate of the hundreds of thousands of refugees. On the Israeli side it has been suggested that Arab radio broadcasts encouraged these people to leave the field of war only to return after it was purged of the Jews. I do not think this discussion is quite relevant because - I believe - that it is not decisive which radio station or what authority caused the refugees to flee. Just like the tens of thousands who, in 1940, fled to France from the Netherlands and Belgium to escape Hitler's armies, the Arabs were not given a diktat or marching orders to pack their bags. No less than refugees in Europe they attempted to escape in terror from the war. It was not the one advising them to flee who can be held responsible for their fate but rather those practising violence. It was the war that the Arabs were fleeing from. It is certain who initiated the struggle in 1948: not the Israelis but the Arab League countries.

What is certain is that at the time the BBC Radio quoted the Secretary-General of the Arab League at a press conference in Cairo as follows: *"This will be a genocidal war and a great slaughter, which will be spoken of like the Mongolian massacres and the Crusades."* Exaggerated language of course. But what could the simple Arab population think other than that a horrible time was about to come?

From descriptions by BBC correspondent Erskine Childers,⁵⁵⁾ who sympathised with the Arabs, it appears that there were 650,000 refugees, and that is definitely the maximum. The lowest estimate is 300,000. Which means that initially there were no more refugees than there are people living in a large Dutch city.

In theory it would have been extremely easy to collect them together and to set them down somewhere else, but in practice things were different. It has become a matter of gloomy theory. To the outside world all Arabs feel like brothers and show mutual solidarity. Internally, things are quite different, because the fabric of their societies consists of families, clans, tribes and a few nations. Brethren from elsewhere are not easily incorporated into these structures. This is true not only for those displaced from Palestine. Thus the poor devils from Yemen are welcome to join their affluent brethren in Kuwait - as guest workers, but nothing more. Palestinian refugees are therefore not absorbed into the neighbouring and sparsely populated Arab commonwealth. Rather they have obtained a higher profile in their dispersion. Yet, it must be said, they have gained a place in the Arab world. And so we may say that it is incorrect to argue that it is the Israelis who have created their problem: the Arabs themselves have done it.

There was also a counter-current that was silently absorbed into Israel. When it was stated in no uncertain terms that the Jewish communities were no longer welcome in the

55) In the 1960s Erskine Barton Childers was working for the BBC in both radio and television. His broadcasts for the famous BBC World Service ranged on varying topics from the Suez Crisis and Palestine of 1956 to the John F. Kennedy assassination in 1963. The Suez Canal and Palestine issues would later form the basis of his often-quoted writings. He was seen as one of the important writers in the West to challenge the view that the Palestinian refugees of the 1948 war fled their homes because of Arab evacuation orders. (See: "The Transformation of Palestine" by Erskine B. Childers - Northwestern University Press, Evanston # 1971, pp. 165-202).

Arab host countries, where they had resided for centuries, an even greater number of them than the Palestinian refugee stream were driven to Israel, stripped bare, leaving everything behind. And that aspect is usually ignored.⁵⁶⁾

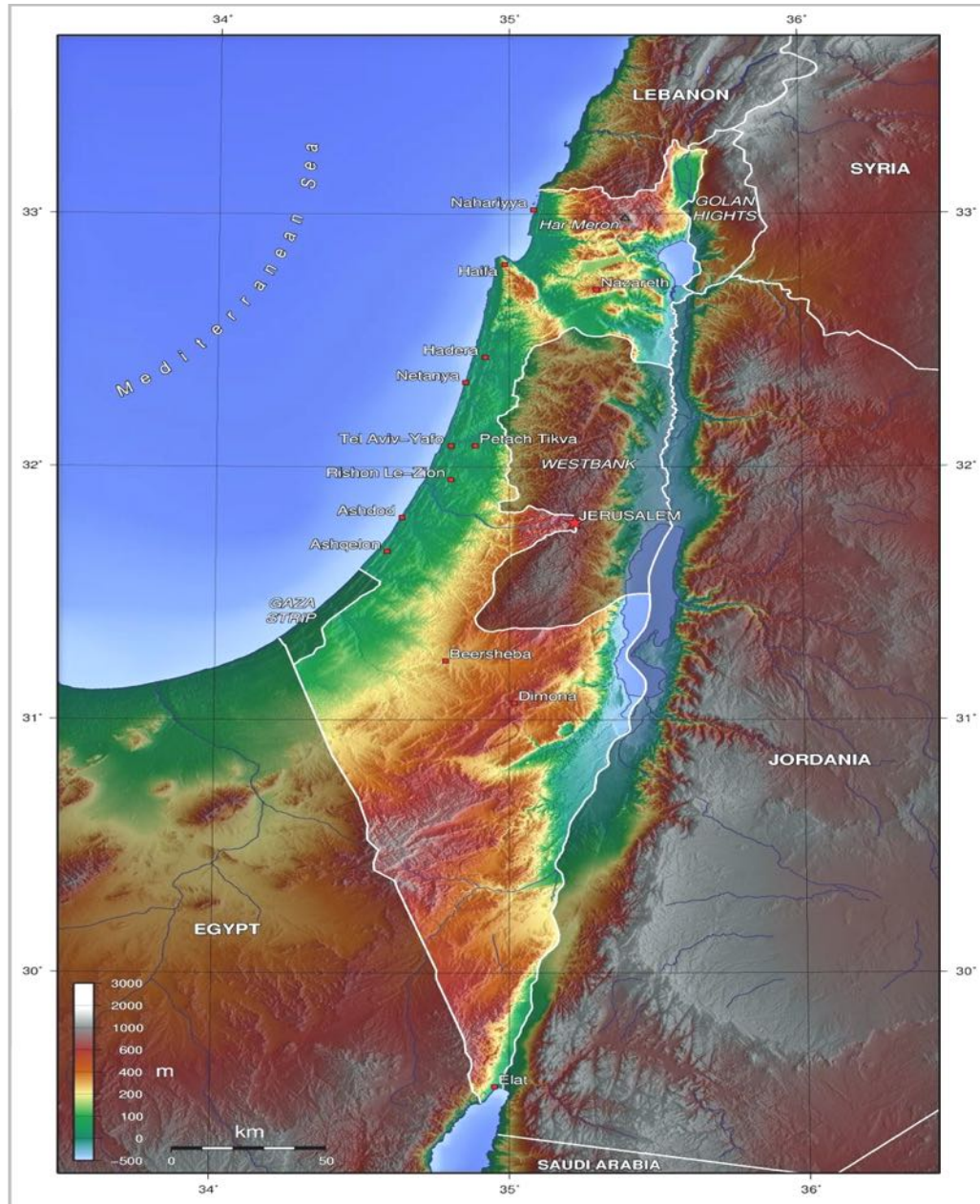
It may be a good thing – in order to bury that garden myth once and for all – to think on the following: the entire Arab-Muslim population has 112 million people. That is a generous estimate, if the criterion ‘Arab’ is readily accepted also for mixed peoples because they were represented at a meeting such as that held in Khartoum. This multitude possesses 11.6 million square kilometres. That is a huge expanse – more than 280 times the size of the Netherlands and more than 500 times that of Israel. On this vast plain, 2.5 million, consisting of 20% of world Jewry, ask for a piece of land the size of a postage stamp. The Jews in the world are a mere particle and they believe to have the right to a pinprick of land...

Remark by Luns:

On the map at the beginning of this article and the one below, part of Israel is coloured differently. That is actually Israel’s heartland, covering Judea and Samaria, generally indicated by the misleading term ‘West Bank’. This area was occupied in the 1948 War of Independence by the Jordanian army and remained so until 1967 when, consequent on the Six Day War, it was once again united with the rest of Israel (then too the military-strategic Golan Heights were annexed, but it did not become part of Israel). Led by Glubb Pasha, an Englishman who was actually named John Bagot, with brute force the Jewish inhabitants were expelled in 1948 from the biblical Judeah and Samaria. Jewish cemeteries were desecrated and synagogues were destroyed or violated by using them as stables or chicken coops, and even as toilets. Between 1948 and 1967 Jordan did little or nothing to develop these areas. Section 6 of the Jordanian Constitution explicitly stated: “Any person, except a Jew, can be a Jordanian citizen and can live in the Jordanian controlled areas”. Judeah and Samaria, when occupied by Jordan, were thus off limits to Jews! There was, however, some Arab occupation. It was also the case that large areas were accessible to military personnel only.

What many are not aware of is that the large influx of settlers to the West Bank did not take place until in between 1974 and 2000, something that played no role when Hiltermann wrote his piece. During this period an estimated 400,000 Arabs from Syria and Jordan moved here, often on only a tourist visa. If it turned out that the social conditions and wages were better than at home, they decided to stay. The Jews returned after 1967, first to Hebron, where the Jewish community was massacred in 1929, and also to the places around Gush Etzion, which the Arab Legion had destroyed in 1948. It was only after 1973 that the Jewish pioneers began to settle in the deserted areas of Samaria, Benjamin and Jordan Valley, while the incoming Arabs went elsewhere. In 2010 about 1.3 million Islamic Arabs lived in Judeah and Samaria as well as 400,000 Jews and an estimated 60,000 Christians.

56) From 1948 until the early 1970s about 860,000 Jews left their homes in Arab countries, where they had stayed for many generations and where they felt at home. A total of 260,000 reached Israel in the period between 1948 and 1951, and thereafter a further 600,000. The Jews of Egypt and Libya were expelled, while those of Iraq, Yemen, Syria, Lebanon and North Africa had to leave because of a coordinated effort by the Arab governments to create physical and political hardship. The exodus was the result of a deliberate policy on the part of the Arab League. Most were forced to abandon all their belongings without compensation. The World Organization of Jews from Arab Countries (WOJAC) estimates the size of Jewish-owned real estate left behind in Arab countries at 100,000 square kilometres, or more than four times the size of the State of Israel.



Introductory Remarks: Who gets to be a refugee?

Written in 2010

For calculations in the context of the Palestinian Refugee problem, there are hardly any precise and verifiable figures that can serve as a starting point. Consequently, the figures with respect to Palestinian refugees are mostly built on estimates and on similar developments elsewhere, such as in neighboring Jordan. Even if the calculations are correct, the results remain a tentative approximation with a wide possibility of deviation, but they do point in the right direction. We may therefore consider them trends correct.

It is certain, to friend and foe alike, that UNRWA statistics are highly unreliable. In this thorny matter, politics has always taken precedence over facts. The root cause must be sought in the religious dimension of Judaism. They are the people of God, sprung from the promises that God made to patriarch Abraham thousands of years ago in the so-called umbrella covenant. Many Jews spit on the fact that they would be the so-called chosen people: "We have already suffered enough from being chosen. Let's put a stop to that." That entirely understandable attitude is to no avail, for Israel's opponents, albeit mostly unconsciously, see it differently anyway (among them are many for whom religion may be stolen). This eludes ordinary logic and falls under the chapter of meta-history. The Jews have often misbehaved in history and this has not hurt them financially. As it turns out, they have a talent for making themselves unloved. But that does not explain why throughout their long history they have always been the outcast among nations.

I had not previously come up against the statement that **"a quarter of the people in the refugee camps do not belong there"**. That is what this article is about, which could not have been decently written without the study published in 2007 on a different but related topic, entitled "Voodoo Demographics", that, in its turn, was based on the solid booklet: "The Million Person Gap" of 78 pages by Michael L. Wise, published in 2005 by the "Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies".

"Voodoo Demographics" appeared in 2006 on Azureonline and is certainly worth downloading, for it shows the problem of arriving at precise figures of Arab demographics. What is going on? The Palestinian Authority (PA) would appear to have systematically manipulated the population statistics with double counting, unrealistic assumptions, etc., unrelated to the statistics as reported by the UNRWA (UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees) which in themselves also presented a false picture. The PA distortions would 'show' that Palestinian fertility is the highest in the world with a net increase of **4.75%** per annum (natural growth plus immigration), while the true rates for the West Bank and Gaza, were respectively **1.8** and **2.9%**. Not the presumed high Arab fertility, but the net migrations played a decisive role (immigration minus emigration), and these also distorted the numeric projections, just like they did in our study, and these disturbed the numerical projections as revealed in this study before you here.

The PA's falsification of the figures since the Oslo accords of 1993 has always been accepted as the plain truth. The "Roadmap to Peace" was defended at the time by Premier Ariel Sharon in the Parliament with the argument *"that very soon the number of Arabs would top the number of Jews in Israel (then 5.5 million) and that thus a policy intended for a minority no longer sufficed."* He stated that the new reality was obliging Israel to follow a different policy. Thus, based on false figures, Sharon claimed the aims of the Roadmap had become inevitable. No small matter! In 1967, in the wake of

the Six Day War, the socialist Prime Minister Levi Eshkol argued that annexing Judea and Samaria would be demographic suicide for the Jewish state. How different things turned out! Findings by the Israeli Population and Immigration Authority from Dec. 2011 demonstrated that in the year 2001, 69% of births were Jewish and 28% Muslim. By contrast, the 2010 birth figures were respectively 76% and 22%. In the long run such a trend is in favor of an overwhelming presence of the Jewish residents. In light of this observation, it clearly goes against the national interests of the country to sacrifice land to an increasingly marginal opponent who, totally unsubstantiated and extremely persistent, continues to deny Israel's right to exist. (see: "Israel's Jewish Births up 20%" by Gavriel Queenann that appeared in the Arutz Sheva News of December 7, 2011)

The implied average fertility rate for the Palestinian refugee camps is 3.5%, based on an initial population of the refugee camps of 472,000 (according to the UN Mediator report at the time) and based also on the unrealistic assumption that there would never have been immigration to or emigration from the camps, except for an additional inflow of 234,000 in the aftermath of the Six-day War of 1967. Based on an initial population of 726,000, according to the assessment of the Crown Prince of Jordan, the annual growth figure becomes grosso modo 3.3% except for the period in between 1967 en 1980, when there was net-emigration. These kind of statistics over such a long time need to be critically reviewed, because the Arab fertility diminished after 1980, for which Jordan serves as a measure of comparison, since it shares many characteristics with the refugee camp population.

I should point out that the term refugee, according to the Crown Prince, not only includes those in the refugee camps, but all those who left the new State of Israel but did not settle in camps. But, of course, the figures of those in or outside the camps should be distinguished, which is not done - and this is cause of confusion. In the Arab mind once a refugee always a refugee! In terms of international law, a refugee ceases to be a refugee once he has acquired outside the temporary facilities a more or less permanent means of existence in accordance to the requirements of human dignity, which does not mean that no hardships are involved and that a longing for a return to his former home cannot be cherished, as the Jews have sustained for two millennia.

In this article I put the focus of attention on those who are cared for in the camps and deserve to be cared for under the legal terms of being a Palestinian refugee. The point of departure is the size of the population of the refugee camps as from start and to compare that with subsequent UNRWA reports in order to establish who belongs to the category of refugee. The problem set forth here purports to do no more than illustrate that the effect of UNRWA management principles has had sizable quantitative effects.

In the calculations, natural population growth was assumed to be more or less identical to that of Jordan. In the end, it appears that more than a quarter of the refugees were improperly granted refugee status based on what was previously international practice. It is, but less important than one would assume. For if we start to analyse the situation as from 1980 and forget about the preceding 32 years, we still arrive at a dilution of 684,0003 or 15.4% of the total refugee population who do not belong there under the term of "Palestinian refugee".

Except for an interval of fifteen years, foreign elements have entered the camps in continual influx. And then the question arises: "Who wants to live there? Surely the living conditions in the camps are less than ideal." The following applies. The Islamic frame of mind lacks a drive towards a healthy economic and social development, which results in a society that is backward by Western standards. Poverty and desolation seem to go hand in hand with Islam. Slavery, abolished in 1905 under Western pressure, especially thanks to the involvement of Cardinal Lavigerie, has always been the motor of their economy. (See article: "By blaming the Jews, the UN has muffled the cries of

those who suffer”) The official statistics state that in Turkey a million people were living in 2002 under the food-poverty line and it is probably not better in other countries of the Islamic space (see: “Poverty Study for Turkey - 2002”). The unemployment figures elsewhere give little or no reason for optimism. Unemployment is 30% in Algeria (2007), which is by no means an exception. Except for Turkey, there are no hard statistics for people living under the food-poverty line in Islamic countries. It goes without saying that if at first hungry, living in a camp is relatively a good life.

My approach provides new insights for these issues, although the assumptions are not new. In her painstakingly researched and heavily criticized 1984 study “From Time Immemorial”, Joan Peters points out that UNRWA defined any Arab who lived in Palestine for a minimum of only two years before Israel became independent in 1948, and who left Israeli territory at that time, plus all the Arabs who descended from such individuals to the end of time were to be considered as refugees. Additionally, Ms. Peters asserts that tens if not hundreds of thousands of Arabs migrated to Palestine under the British Mandate administration, attracted by the important economic development and infrastructural improvements introduced into Palestine by the Jewish ‘settlers’ and the British administration. Her arguments may be taken as grounds for stating that many not even deserved the original refugee status. It is therefore justified in every possible way to depart from the report of the UN Mediator of October 1948, which arrives at exactly 472,000 refugees in need of relief.

Up till now, nobody— not even Joan Peters – has been able to indicate what percentage of the residents of the refugee camps actually belong there. Because the solution of the refugee problem is a condition sine qua non at every peace negotiation I hope that this analysis will make a contribution. A lasting solution to the problem is served by facts and realistic assumptions, even if the results are not always pleasant.

Finally, it should be noted that it is a scandal that Arab countries have never taken action. Finally it should be mentioned that it is a scandal that the Arab countries have never taken measures to receive the Palestinian refugees into their enormous space, as if there has never been integration of refugees at other times! In the 19th and 20th centuries masses of people of all types of nationalities have been resettled in all parts of the world, and successfully too! Where there’s a will, there’s a way, as was shown with the 14.5 million people that crossed the borders once the partition of India was decided in August 1947 into what is now known as Pakistan, India and Bangladesh. In the aftermath more than 7 million Muslims came to Pakistan from India while more than 7 million Hindus and Sikhs moved to India from Pakistan. The problem was soon resolved for all those fugitives, who were fully integrated in their new home lands.

Note A: The article “Voodoo Demographics” was written by Bennet Zimmerman, Roberta Seid and Michael L. Wise. They are the authors of “The Arab Population in the West Bank and Gaza: The Million Person Gap”, published in 2006 through the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies in Israel. Population Forecast for Israel and “West Bank 2025” debuted in Israel at the Herzliya Conference and in the United States at the American Enterprise Institute in Washington D.C. Without their work, this article could not have been written in good conscience. I quote:

«« A ‘demographic time bomb’ is ticking, it is said, in which Arabs will soon outnumber Jews in the areas under Israel’s control. Indeed, when the Palestinian Authority’s (PA) reported 2004 population of 3.83 million is added to the 1.3 million Israeli Arabs, the new total-5.1 million Arabs-rapidly approaches parity with Israel’s 5.5 million Jews. This number, coupled with PA claims to the world’s highest growth rate and a high Israeli Arab

birthrate, as well, has led to the widely held conviction that the Jews will soon become a minority west of the Jordan River-and that the idea of a Jewish state with an enduring Jewish majority will be severely undermined. (...) These deep-rooted assumptions about a demographic time bomb, however, are wrong. A careful review of the data behind these forecasts reveals that Israel does not, in fact, face an imminent demographic threat from any combination of Arab population groups. Rather, the source of much of Israel's anxiety may be traced to inaccurate numbers issued by the Palestinian Authority and taken for granted by the rest of the world-numbers that paint a very different picture. »»

Note B: The PCBS (Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics) reported a mid-year 2004 population of 3.827 million, exactly the same number forecast in 1998. And, in fact, the PCBS population figures, released each year since 1998, have always been a reiteration of a forecast made shortly after the publication of the 1997 Census results. The PCBS, until after the release of this study (The Million Person Gap) on January 10, 2005, never adjusted any of these figures to reflect actual reported demographic events. (The Million Person Gap, p. 11)

Note C: In view of expected emigration from the camps, which the UN Mediator calls "*doubtless recession*", the reported allowance for 500,000 refugees is not to be taken as factual but as a guideline for policy measures. (Suppl. to Document A/648, Part 3 of the progress report of the acting mediator for Palestine).

Note D: I quote from the scholarly work of Paul A. Ladame "Le Rôle des Migrations dans le Monde Libre" (The role of migrations in the Free World) – Librairie E. Droz, Genève # 1958 (pp. 236-37):

«« Throughout history, we have seen nobles and citizens, peasants and proletarians, intellectuals and illiterates, Christians of all denominations and Jews fleeing and emigrating - emigrating to flee. There were more than sixty-five million of them in three centuries [in the Free World]. They were the sap of the tree of Western civilization, the vital blood bodies in the bloodstream of the Free World.

But, and this is the decisive fact, although there were certainly millions of refugees in the centuries before ours, those refugees never constituted a 'problem'. That problem was reserved for the twentieth century. It was reserved for our generation. Why is that?

The first answer is that the emigrants we saw, even though they were psychologically refugees, were not a problem. They were, at their own risk, free to move around while in search of a host country. They either made it or died along the way. It was cruel, but clear. No one could have imagined that one day it would be considered humanitarian progress to put them in camps and feed, clothe and care for them – just enough to prevent them from dying – without giving them the right to work or hope of emigration.

(...) Finally, and this is our final response, the creation of the League of Nations coincided with the rise of this mass phenomenon. States overwhelmed by the arrival of refugees turned to the League of Nations and asked it to solve for them a problem they would otherwise have had to solve alone.

This brief analysis helps us understand why the refugee problem was reserved for our era, for our generation. (...) From these answers it follows that the refugee problem (...) is essentially a political problem and not just a humanitarian one. »»

• *The Palestinian Refugee Problem –
Who is allowed to be refugee?*

5.27 – It was the Arab leaders who caused the refugee problem

On November 29, 1947, the United Nations General Assembly proposed in Resolution 181 a division of the area west of the Jordan River into a Jewish and Arab part, which was unconditionally rejected by the Arabs. The following year on May 13th 1948, to be precise, the British left the mandate territory without ensuring an orderly transfer in the expectation that the Arabs would then quickly deal with the Jews. Immediately, David Ben Gurion proclaimed the State of Israel on the territory granted by the UN. Meanwhile, the Arabs had already threatened war, and war came. Independence had barely been declared, or Israel was attacked by the armies of six Arab countries, Egypt, Syria, Transjordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and Iraq. The invasion was nothing less but a crime for which the Arab world was never held accountable.

The 1948 war was extensively described in the world press. Numerous foreign journalists, who were in daily contact with all concerned, did write about the flight of Arabs, but even the greatest anti-Zionists saw nothing to lead them to believe that this flight was involuntary. Neither Arab nor Western correspondents, suggested that Israel was expelling the Arabs. The London Times, a newspaper very hostile to Zionism, published no fewer than 11 lead articles on the situation in Israel. In none of them was there even a vague suspicion that Ben Gurion's soldiers were responsible for the flight of the Arabs. Not even a single Arab spokesman made such a claim at the time. Neither the Arab representative to the United Nations, Jamal Husseini, nor the Secretary General of the Arab League, Azzam Pasha, raised it before the forum of nations.



A backbone of Palestinian Authority (PA) ideology, and indeed of anti-Israel propagandists worldwide, is the myth that Israel expelled hundreds of thousands of Arabs from Israel and created the Palestinian refugee problem during the 1948 war of inde-

pendence. However, a regular writer for the official PA newspaper, Mahmud Al-Habbash, maintained in his column (see below), and that almost 60 years after the fact, that in 1948 the Arabs left their homes voluntarily under the instruction of their own Arab leaders and their false promises of a prompt return. He refers to these promises as Arkuvian, after Arkuv – a figure from Arab tradition known for breaking his promises and for his lies. He stated that the Arabs who left their homes, and thus became refugees, did so believing in their leaders' deceptive stories (which is also a problem in the West, by the way). He placed the blame and the responsibility on the shoulders of the Arab leaders and did not mention any so-called Israeli expulsion.

The following excerpts (except for nr. 5) are dealing with the question of the causes of the refugee problem. They were taken from the contributions of Itamar Marcus and Barbara Crook, working for "The Palestinian Media Watch", an organization aimed at establishing a self-portrait of Palestinian society by the careful study and analysis of their own public media. The excerpts were posted on The Palestinian Media Watch website on Dec. 17th 2006. They represent several testimonials from the Palestinian press as from 1999, significant because they were corroborated by still other public Palestinians. One witness was confirmed by Arab Member of the Knesset (the Israelian Parliament), Ibrahim Sarsur, who was then Head of the Islamic Movement in Israel, and the other by a Palestinian journalist, Fuad Abu Higla, in the official PA daily. It is clear from the statements that there is general acknowledgement among Palestinians that Arab leaders bear responsibility for the mass flight of Arabs from Israel in 1948. That this information has been validated by public figures and the media of the Palestinian Authority, confirms that this responsibility is well known – even though, for propaganda purposes, its leaders continue to blame Israel publicly for 'the expulsion'.

1. Journalist writing about the events of 1948
[Al-Hayat Al-Jadida, Dec. 13 2006]

Mahmud Al-Habbash, a regular writer in the official PA paper, Al-Hayat Al-Jadida, indicates in his column "The Pulse of Life" that the Arabs left Israel in 1948 only after Arab political leaders persuaded them to do so by promising the Arabs a speedy return to their homes in Palestine: "*...The leaders and the elites promised us at the beginning of the Nakba (the Catastrophe or establishment of Israel and the creation of refugee problem) in 1948, that the duration of the exile would not be long, and that it would not last more than a few days or months, and afterwards the refugees would return to their homes, which most of them did not leave only until they put their trust in those 'Arkuvian' promises made by the leaders and the political elites. Afterwards, days passed, months, years and decades, and the promises were lost in the strain of the succession of events...*"

2. Woman who fled Israel in 1948
[Asmaa Jabir Balasimah Um Hasan, Al-Ayyam, May 16 2006]

"*We heard sounds of explosions and of gunfire at the beginning of the summer in the year of the Catastrophe. They told us: The Jews have attacked our region and it is better to evacuate the village and return after the battle is over. And indeed there were among us [who fled Israel] those who left a fire burning under the pot, those who left their flock [of sheep] and those who left their money and gold behind, based on the assumption that we would return after a few hours.*"

3. Article by senior PA journalist
[Al-Hayat Al-Jadidah, March 19 2001]

Fuad Abu Higla, then a regular columnist in the official PA daily Al Hayat Al Jadida, wrote an article before an Arab summit meeting, criticizing the Arab leaders for a series of failures. One of the failures he cited, in the name of a prisoner, was that an earlier generation of Arab leaders ‘forced’ the Arabs to leave the new State of Israel in 1948, again placing the blame for the flight on the Arab leaders. Abu Higla wrote in his column: *“I have received a letter from a prisoner in Acre prison that was addressed to the Arab summit: ‘To the [Arab and Muslim] Kings and Presidents: Poverty is killing us, the symptoms are exhausting us and the souls are leaving our body, yet you are still searching for the way to provide aid, like one who is looking for a needle in a haystack or like the armies of your predecessors in the year of 1948, who forced us to leave [Israel], on the pretext of clearing the battlefields of civilians... So what will your summit do now?’”*

4. Son and the grandson of those who fled in 1948
[PA TV April 30, 1999]

An Arab viewer called Palestinian Authority television and quoted his father and grandfather, complaining that in 1948 the Arab District Officer ordered all Arabs to leave Palestine or be labelled traitors. In response, Arab MK Ibrahim Sarsur, then Head of the Islamic Movement in Israel, cursed the leaders who ordered Arabs to leave, thus, acknowledging Israel’s assertion. Here follows the statement of the son and grandson of men who fled the country: *“Mr. Ibrahim [Sarsur], I address you as a Muslim. My father and grandfather told me that during the Catastrophe, our district officer issued an order that whoever stays in Palestine and in Majdel (near Ashkelon – Southern Israel) is a traitor, he is a traitor.”* The response from Ibrahim Sarsur: *“The one who gave the order forbidding them to stay there bears guilt for this, in this life and the Afterlife throughout history until Resurrection Da.”*

5. Mahmoud Abbas, a leading figure in the PLO (he became PA-chairman in 2004)
[Falastin al-Thawra, Beiroet, 1976] taken from the Horowitz Freedom Center

In the official journal of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the PLO, Dr. Mahmoud Abbas testified: *“The Arab armies entered Palestine to protect the Palestinians from the Zionist tyranny, but instead they abandoned them, forced them to emigrate and to leave their homeland, imposed upon them a political and ideological blockade and threw them into prisons similar to the ghettos in which the Jews used to live in Eastern Europe.”*

The situation described above is not as simple as it looks. History is hardly ever simple and the facts are often contradictory. True enough, Arabs left their homes under the instruction of their leaders. But there were also departures because of the Jews. For instance, Yitzhak Rabin acknowledges in his memoirs that he gave the order for the expulsion of some 50,000 Arabs from Lydda and the nearby town of Ramleh, situated just South of Tel Aviv. On July 12th 1948, Israeli soldiers fighting the Arab Legion and local irregulars were ordered to clear the two towns of their Arab residents. In two days’ time all the Arab inhabitants had been driven away. The expulsions from Lydda

and Ramleh remain a deep scar in the collective Arab memory. Despite what took place in those cities, the overall picture remains valid, because in other Israeli cities the Arabs could have just stayed in their homes, but they decided otherwise.

5.28 – How the refugee problem came into being

As concerns the 1948 refugees, we talk about Arabs, for the modern notion of Palestinian was not invented yet. The modern notion of Palestinian, indicating nationhood separate from a Jewish presence, did not exist at the time of Israel's independence, as appears from the discussions at the United Nations at the time, of which the transcripts have become available for public access after the year 1998. The Arab representatives during the discussions on the United Nations Partition Plan for Palestine only spoke of Arabs. It was in 1964 that the modern notion of Palestinian was first introduced by Yasser Arafat upon the founding of the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organization), year also that the Palestinian flag was introduced. Yet earlier, the term was already used in a different setting: in 1936 certificates were distributed to people, including Jews, stating they were Palestinian. In that sense the United Nations Partition Plan of 1947 was designed for 'all' the Palestinians, both Jews and Arabs! But this plan was disgracefully rejected by the Arabs.

A remarkable incident occurred that Daniel Pipes cites in his 1980 book called "Greater Syria: The History of an Ambition", which shows that the Palestine of the Palestinians is a very fledgling nation indeed:

«« In 1926, Lord Plumer was appointed as the second High Commissioner of Palestine. The Arabs within the Mandate were infuriated when Plumer stood up for the Zionists' national anthem Hatikva during ceremonies held in his honor when Plumer first visited Tel Aviv. When a delegation of regional Arabs protested Plumer's 'Zionist bias', the High Commissioner asked the Arabs if he remained seated when their national anthem was played, "*wouldn't you regard my behavior as most unmannerly?*" Met by silence, Plumer asked: "*By the way, have you got a national anthem?*" When the delegation replied with chagrin that they did not, he snapped back: "*I think you had better get one as soon as possible.*" »» (Finally, in 1987 they adopted an Anthem.)

The Arabs have always claimed that between 800,000 and 1,000,000 Arabs became refugees around the period when Israel became independent. However, the 1945 census found only 756,000 permanent Arab residents living in what was to become the state of Israel. On November 30th 1947, when the United Nations voted for the 'Partition', this community had grown to 809,000. An accurate 1948 census counted 160,000 Arabs still living in the country after the struggle was over.⁵⁷⁾ This means that approximately 663,000 Arabs left the country (allowing for natural population growth and casualties of war). A report by the UN Mediator on Palestine arrived at a figure of 472,000 refugees, the remainder to be explained by relocation of migrants, less than 30%, who wanted to rebuild their existence in their countries of origin. We should bear

57) Most figures given for the number of Arab refugees in the Middle East at the end of the war are estimates, which put the number of refugees between the range of 600,000 to 760,000. In contrast, the number of the Arab citizens living within the territory of Israel is accurate, and is based on the results of the first Israeli census, held on 8 Nov. 1948. This census had a clear purpose: to determine to what extent the Arabs living in Israel threatened Israel's national security. Thus, bearing in mind the method and the purpose, it is logical to assume that much effort was invested in trying to reach at an accurate result. (...) The number of Arabs living in Israel as of 31 Dec. 1950 stood at 170,000." From "Israel and the Refugee Problem: From Exodus to Resettlement, 1948-52", by Alexander Bligh, in Middle Eastern Studies # Jan. 1998 (Vol. 34, pp. 123-147).

in mind that a large proportion of the 1948 refugees had been recent immigrants themselves who had no firm attachment to the land of Israel they had left behind. And they left because they were urged to it by their Arab leaders who wanted them to evade the impending massacres they had in mind for the Jews.

The Muslim-Arabs had been attacking Jews – especially the Jewish farmers working their fields – already before the UN Partition of November 29, 1947 had been conceived. The Muslims swore to kill all the Jews in the land. They did their best to keep their vow. On May 14, 1948 the Jews finally declared their own state and from that moment on they were 'Israelis'. The next day seven neighboring countries – Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Yemen, invaded the new state of Israel. The Muslim-Arabs shouted via their radios stations to slaughter all the Jews and dance in their blood. That gave the motivation behind the urge for all Arabs to leave Israel as quickly as possible.



Some historical facts in relation to the origin of the problem are revealing. Non-Jewish immigrants had come in the second part of the 19th century and first part of the 20th from all quarters in the Middle East, including Turkey, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Trans-jordan, Saudi Arabia, the Yemens, Egypt, Sudan, and Libya. Joan Peters in her ground breaking book of 1984: "From Time Immemorial", asserts that *"...if all those Jews and all those Arabs who arrived in (...) Palestine between 1893 and 1948 had remained, and if they were forced to leave now, a dual exodus of at least equal proportion would in all probability take place. Palestine would be depopulated once again."* ⁵⁸⁾

What took hundreds of thousands of Arabs to Palestine? Economic opportunity! The Zionists brought the skills and necessary resources. They initiated economic activities that created jobs and wealth on a level far beyond that of the indigenous peoples. In response, large groups of Arabs moved toward the settlers to find a living. They found there a higher standard of living, greater freedoms, superior education and better health care than their compatriots could get in the Arab Muslim countries. Family names of many Palestinians, now attest to their non-Palestinian origins. Just as Jews bear names like Berliner, Warsaw and Toledano, phone books on the West Bank – which is actually in the heart-land of Israel, are filled with names like Elmisri (Egyptian), Chalabi (Syrian), Mugrabi (North Africa). Even the infamous George Habash – the founder and

former Secretary General of the “Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine” – bears a name with origins in Ethiopia, which is ‘Habash’ in both Arabic and Hebrew. The conclusion is clear. There are Arab-Islamic Israelis as well as Arab-Jewish Israelis, from Yemen for instance. If, in the knowledge of this, one uses the term Palestinian as justification for terrorism against the State of Israel en its citizens, then I strongly disagree, unrelated to any historic-biblical point of view. Justification should be based on facts and moral! (See also the article: “The Economics of Settlement since 1880” by George Gilder # 2011.).

5.29 – They want to keep it as an open sore

In the beginning, the Israelis did not expect the refugees to be a major issue. They presumed, quite rightly, that the Arab states with their vast spaces would be willing to resettle the majority and they expected that some sort of compromise on the remainder could be worked out in the context of an overall settlement. And indeed there was no ‘permanent’ refugee problem in the early days, although conditions in the camps were lamentable. In October 1948 the first shipments of United Nations relief supplies arrived in Beiruth. Sir Raphael Cilento, Director of the Disaster Relief Project, later called Refugee Relief Project, emphasized the magnitude of the task, saying that nearly half of the population in Palestine, or approximately 360,000 refugees, was claiming aid (UN Press Release PAL/322, 1 Oct. 1948). The new U.S. Special Representative to Israel, James McDonald, cabled President Truman of the US on October 17:

«« Of the approximately 400,000 refugees, an estimated 100,000 old men, women and children, who are shelterless and have little or no food, will die when the rains come. (...) The refugee problem is reaching catastrophic proportions and should be treated as a disaster. (...) The UN relief machinery is both inappropriate and inadequate and has led to gross inefficiency and wastefulness. Immediate action, guided by a comprehensive program of relief, is needed to avert horrifying losses. The present system of getting the relief from the contributor through the UN machinery to the countries and then the individual refugees is a failure with wastage en route estimated at as high as ninety percent. »»

Remarkably, after the UN had effectively started providing food, shelter, clothing and medical attention to the Arabs who had fled Israel, needy Arabs came to the camps from all corners of the Arab commonwealth. A newcomer simply signed the register as refugee, which by that act made him a registered Palestinian refugee eligible to free aid. In December 1949 the “UN Relief for Palestine Refugees in the Near East”, the UNRPR, was succeeded by the “United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East”, the UNRWA, which continued to supervise the refugee camps ever since. The treatment of the refugees in the decade following their displacement was best summed up by a former UNRWA official, Ralph Galloway, in August 1958: *“The Arab States do not want to solve the refugee problem. They want to keep it as an open sore, as an affront to the United Nations and as a weapon against Israel. Arab leaders don’t give a damn whether the refugees live or die.”* ⁵⁹⁾

58) Joan Peter’s assertion that Palestine would be depopulated again if all the late arrivals left, is exaggerated. Palestine would become very sparsely populated again, as in the 19th century, with a majority of Arabs, except for Jerusalem. George Gilder says in his 2011 article that in the mid-19th century between two and three hundred thousand Arabs lived in what is now Israel, the West Bank and Gaza, living in miserable and pestilential conditions similar to backward Chad. Thanks to the Jewish settlers, only thanks to them, living conditions there improved dramatically.

It was in the immediate aftermath of the war that the refugee problem was developed into a political argument. In 1949, the reporter Mark Foster Ethridge served as U.S. Representative to the Conciliation Commission for Palestine that had been set up “*to achieve a final settlement of all questions outstanding*”. On March 20, preceding the Lausanne Conference that sealed the fate of Palestine, he wrote to the US Secretary of State Dean G. Acheson: ⁶⁰⁾

«« A major reason for the Arab unwillingness to properly absorb and resettle the refugees at this time is rooted in their struggle against Israel rather than in internal political or economic and social considerations. The Arabs see in the 700,000 or 800,000 refugees a political weapon against the Jews. They feel they can summon world opinion against Israel, even if some refugees (out of distress) die in the meantime. The Arabs sought the refugees’ repatriation, both as a demand of justice and as a means to subvert the Jewish state. Hence, (in their mindset) it is better to leave the refugees for the time being in squalor and living impermanently than to support and implement resettlement schemes in Arab countries, which would neutralize and perhaps, ultimately, solve the problem. »»

As Ethridge perceived, there was a need born of the context of conflict with Israel – to use the refugees as a weapon against the Jewish state. The hundreds of thousands of refugees, if left in misery, would continue to demand repatriation to Israel, and would find support for this in the international community. If allowed back, they could destabilize the Jewish state. If not allowed back, their existence would eat at world support for Israel and would ignite an endless and violent conflict between the Arab states and the Jews living in Israel. Ethridge pressed for American pressure on Israel to allow back some 250,000 of the refugees to neutralize this political threat and to do at least partial justice to the Palestinians. Israel, having won the war and gotten rid of its potentially destabilizing Arab minority, was in no mood for a compromise, which in itself was seen as a mortal threat to the country’s wellbeing. As concerns the Arabs, they were no more willing to compromise in 1949 than they had been in 1947, and after the Lausanne conference they again unanimously rejected the UN resolution that addressed the question.

Under international definitions the status of refugee only applies to the first generation of displaced persons. However, the UN makes an exception for Palestinians. As the Dutch political leader Geert Wilders once said: (Speech in Tel Aviv on 5 Dec. 2010)

«« By arbitrarily reducing thousands of their citizens to statelessness, the Jordanian authorities want to force the Palestinians to turn their aspirations towards the establishment of another Palestinian state in Judea and Samaria [instead of their original homeland]. This decision is a great injustice committed by the Hashemite rulers of Jordan – this foreign clan installed by the British. »»

One might conclude that this attitude may have prevailed sixty years ago among a certain class of leaders, but that things have changed for the better now. I am afraid not. To give an example. In 2004, there were local elections in Palestinian territories, but the Supreme National Committee for the Protection of the Right of Return, announced on June 28, 2004 in the Fatah newspaper Al-Hayat Al-Jadida that it opposes the parti-

59) Ralph Galloway as quoted by Terence Prittie in a September 1973 essay, entitled “Middle East Refugees”, published in a compilation “The Palestinians: People, History, Politics”, page 71.

60) I have not succeeded in finding the letter to Dean Acheson. Folder 24 in the Mark Ethridge Papers (#3842) at The University of North Carolina, which contains the correspondence of January until April 1949, does not contain letters dated March 20. Who can be of help in finding the letter?

cipation of the refugee camps residents in those elections. It justified its objection “*as protecting the unique status of the refugee camps in Gaza and the West Bank*”, considering their testimony to what happened in 1948. The committee also warned of the dangers of integrating the refugee camps into the urban housing units (because then the problem would have been solved). Source: Palestinian Media Watch.

Although much is heard about the plight of the Palestinian refugees, little is said about the Jews who fled the Arab states. Their situation had long been precarious. During the 1947 UN debates, Arab leaders threatened them. For instance, Egypt’s delegate told the General Assembly at the time: “*The lives of one million Jews in Muslim countries would be jeopardised by [refusing the] partition.*” The number of Jews fleeing Arab countries for Israel in the years following Israel’s independence, after having lived there for many generations, is comparable to the number of Arabs leaving Palestine. Many Jews were not allowed to take little more than the shirt each one had on his body. These refugees did not want to repatriate because they were fully integrated and were valued and highly respected by their fellow citizens in those countries. After their repatriation, little was heard of them, for they never remained refugees for long and dependent on government support. Of the 835,000 Jewish refugees, 586,000 were resettled in Israel. They are called the forgotten million: the Jews from the Arab world who had lived in ancient settlements from the Atlantic seaboard to the mountains of Kurdistan. As a result less than 10,000 were left at the turn of the millennium.

5.30 – A second wave of refugees

Using Judea and Samaria as a launching point, which area is commonly known as the West Bank, Jordan attacked Israel on June 5, 1967. During the subsequent war, many Arab residents fled to escape the expected fighting. The “CAMERA Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America”, available on the Internet, reports under the item of Six-Day War (retrieval Aug. 1, 2009):

«« As for other alleged expulsions, most if not all West Bank Arabs who fled to the East Bank (Jordan) after the war did so of their own volition. Often they or their families were originally from the East Bank, or they were civil servants or pensioners afraid they might lose their Jordanian income if they stayed. The New York Times reported on June 11, 1967 that Jordanian radio broadcasts urged people not to flee, indicating this was a matter of choice, not compulsion: “*The refugees are on the move in spite of repeated Jordanian radio broadcasts that say: ‘To the Arabs of the West Bank, do not desert your homes. Be patient. Be men and do not desert your homes. Be patient. Do not create another refugee problem.’*”

Although Arab regimes claimed that Israel was expelling thousands of West Bankers, a Times reporter found no supporting evidence: “*At no time during a number of long talks with Arabs in this area was anything said to support Arab charges at the United Nations that thousands had been forced to cross the Jordan River from the West Bank area occupied by the Israelis.*” (“War Brings Problems for ‘48 Palestine Refugees”, New York Times, June 15, 1967) A detailed UN report, filed by the Secretary-General’s Special Representative, Nils-Göran Gussing, also found little support for claims of expulsions. (...) (After the war was over) Israel arranged with the International Red Cross for the return of thousands who had fled. But Jordan discouraged large-scale return; by August, 1967 only 14,000 West Bank Arabs had done so. In 1968, Jordan prohibited those who intended to remain in the East Bank from emigrating to the West Bank or Gaza Strip. Nevertheless, by the time of the 1973 Yom Kippur War, Israel had permitted the return of another 40,000. Sachar says that “*their homes, land, and other property at all times were maintained intact.*”

After the Six-Day War, Israel made repeated attempts to move Palestinian Arabs out of the Gaza Strip and West Bank refugee camps into new, permanent housing. The goal was to assist in their “*rehabilitation*” as settled residents who were integrated into the local economy. The PLO opposed rehabilitation, murdering a few Arabs who participated, and intimidating many others. The Arab states successfully sought UN resolutions to keep the refugees in the areas now under Israeli control in the camps. »»»

Yet, in the period between 1974 and 2000 about 400,000 Arabs arrived from Syria and Jordania, often only on a tourist visum. There is little known about their former refugee status, but we may assume, in view of the foregoing, that most of them had been regular inhabitants of the countries they came from. When these Arabs discovered that the living conditions were better than at home, they decided to stay.

**the UNRWA statistics of 2006 for the number of registered refugees
- as of June 30th of each year -**

1950	914.221	
1955	905.986	– 0,9 %
1960	1.120.889	+ 23,7 %
1965	1.280.823	14,3 %
1970	1.425.219	11,3 %
1975	1.632.707	14,6 %
1980	1.844.318	13,0 %
1985	2.093.545	13,5 %
1990	2.422.514	15,7 %
1995	3.172.641	31,0 %
2000	3.737.494	17,8 %
2005	4.283.892	14,6 %

[a yearly accrual of 3,34% resorts to 17,85%]
[the excessive increase between 1990 en 1995 is unexplainable]

No Arab state has ever tried to receive and integrate Palestinian refugees except Jordan. The reason for Jordan to do so was more for political than humanitarian reasons. As one writer put it: “*Jordan accepted the refugees as citizens purely out of self-interest. Jordan wanted to integrate them as Jordanians so that they could not form their own Palestinian government in the West Bank, which could threaten the Jordanian government in Amman.*” The refugees themselves, who migrated to Jordan between 1948 and 1967, did so to escape the impoverished living conditions that resulted from Jordanian rule in the West Bank, which is in fact the heartland of the State of Israel, although still not integrated. During the period under discussion, these people did not consider themselves Palestinians or Palestinian refugees, but Jordanians moving from one part of the country to another. So their perspective was totally different than for those other people with refugee status.

Only when Jordan renounced its claims to Judea and Samaria in 1988 did its policy toward the residents residing there become the same as that for the other Arab countries, of which the following serves as an example. When the Palestinian Authority renewed the Intifada (uprising) in 2000, some 150,000 Palestinians in the West Bank sought safe refuge in Jordan to escape that conflict, but this time the Jordanian government closed its borders except to those with Jordanian passports.

5.31 – A quarter of the people in the camps do not belong there

If, according to the report by the UN Mediator on Palestine, the number of people that had left the new state of Israel in 1948 to opt for refugee status was 472,000 or 71% of the 663,000 who had to flee the country, which seems reasonable indeed, then it is impossible to account for the 4.45 million sixty years later, that were registered on December 31st 2006 being cared for by the “United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees”, the UNRWA. In between, the year 1967 is an important marking point, because in June that year the Six-day War broke out. The UNRWA report, issued on the eve of that war, then showed on its register 1,345,000 refugees situated in the Gaza Strip, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. As a result of that war, if we listen to Hassan Bin Talal, the Crown Prince of Jordan at the time, a further 234,000 refugees coming from the ‘occupied territories’, were added to the previous total, adding up to 1,579,000.⁶¹⁾

An average net population growth rate of 3.35% per year is assumed, which is extremely high, but this is the growth figure as from 1967 when Jordan started to report population growth figures. Jordan provides a natural comparison since it shares many characteristics with the populations of the refugee camps.⁶²⁾ Although the total number of children per woman during her life was undoubtedly higher in the younger years, the infant mortality also ought to have been higher due to less than perfect medical care. With an accrual of almost 3.5% per annum, the refugee population that started at 472,000 would only stand at 882,000 in the middle of 1967 instead of 1,345,000, the discrepancy to be explained by net immigration of an average of 17.800 per year, in total 338,000 (counting the natural increase). In between the middle of 1967 and the middle of 1980, the population would have grown to 2.40 million with zero migration, but then she was only 1.84 million. Therefore, over this period, an aggregate emigration (outflux) of about 447,000 took place, or 34,400 per annum, all hopes having been quenched for the conquest of Israel in the near future. If we continue to accept the Jordanian population growth figures since 1980, the year in which the UNRWA reported 1.84 million people in the camps, the total figure would stand at 3.90 million rather than the reported 4.45 million at the end of 2006, the discrepancy to be explained by net immigration of an average of 14,000 per year (from the poorest of the poorest),⁶³⁾ in total 371,000. Except for the period between 1967 and the late seventies, there was a net arrival of refugees of about 700,000. From where? From anywhere except Palestine. The calculation indicates that the Palestinian refugee problem has been manipulated. If we cumulate the population as from 1948, plus the extra refugees from 1967, with an exponential increase of on average 3.18% per annum (births minus deaths), the aggregate arrived at is 3.72 million people by the end of 2006, who justifiably descend from the original Israeli-Arabs with refugee status. **Compared to the reported figure of 4.45 million, this means a dilution of no less than 16%, implying that at least 730,000 Arabs in the refugee camps are of immigrant origin.**

This is a conservative estimate because this does not take into account the departure of original inhabitants from the camps who were never to return again or to return again after a sustained period (a period in which, according to international standards, they

61) “Palestinian Self-Determination” van Hassan Bin Talal – Quartet Books # 1981.

62) The current population growth of Israeli Arabs in the West Bank, after discounting some migration, is 1.8% per year, rather than the published 3.3%. This revised figure is strongly attacked, yet it seems to be the only sensible approach. I point to an excellent article on this subject in AZUR (Summer 5766 / 2006 No. 25), which is a quarterly magazine in English and Hebrew, published by the “Shalem Center” in Jerusalem.

63) In Turkey alone, about 1 million people lived below the hunger-poverty line in 2002. (See “Poverty Study for Turkey – 2002”)

would have lost their refugee status). The calculated increases, discussed above, were net figures which resulted from inflow minus outflow, of which details are lacking. **It is not exaggerated to assume that the dilution is more in the proximity of a quarter.** By way of comparison, a net immigration of 17,800 (already mentioned) could have been the result from an inflow of 24,000 and an outflow of 6,200 of which 4,500 was related to the original stock. This is by all means a conservative approach. These kind of numbers would lead to a 26.3% dilution, which implies that there are 1.17 million Arabs of foreign stock in the camps (in the middle of 2009). We may thus safely say that in 2009 one and a quarter million people in the camps did not deserve the 'Palestinian' refugee status, although for them the help obtained was very welcome.



5.32 – The Arab countries do not want peace

Evidently, especially until 1967 when hopes were still running high for the annihilation of Israel, many Arabs came to join the Palestinian refugee camps in attendance of rich spoils, while at the same time they were able to benefit from the UNRWA allocations. The same sentiment prevailed again after 1980, because of the invention of the Muqawama doctrine, meaning 'resistance' in terms of a protracted conflict in which one side attempts to wear down its enemy by continuous harassment and no quick results are to be expected. The plight of many families in the refugee camps who cannot move forward, backwards or sideways remains terrible all the same. They have become the victims of the international power play, and are being used by the Arab leaders in a sordid campaign against Israel.

As concerns a more detailed analysis, the rather unreliable statistics provided by the UNRWA offer some interesting points.⁶⁴⁾ It appears from the list (p. 75) that once the UNRWA started operation in 1950, the number of refugees had almost doubled. There was another remarkable growth between 1985 and 1995 of more than 50% under the impetus of the Muqawama doctrine. Because no exact figures or explanations exist on migratory movements, the estimated migration figures have been averaged out by

64) There is additional reason to doubt the UNRWA reports because many of its employees originally came from the refugee camps.

means of extrapolation. It is reasonable to assume the Arabs have made a smoke screen. The frankness of his Royal Highness Bin Talal is revealing. He reports on page 100 of his book "Palestinian Self-Determination" from 1981: "*By November 1980, UNRWA-registered refugees amounted to 1,800,000 and it is estimated that the total of the world-wide figure might be about double, that is 3,600,000.*" The last figure is pulled out of the air. This number juggling is remarkable to say the least.

Some claim that the number of refugees in 1948 was one million, a whopping discrepancy of what is to be considered reasonable, as this article shows. This would include hundreds of thousands of Arabs who never lived in the region which is now called Israel, but in the mindset of the Arab leaders are still genuine refugees! A very loose family tie with the former inhabitants of Israel will suffice to be officially registered and even that minimal requirement is hardly enforced! The Crown Prince of Jordan, in his comments on the refugee problem, assumes 726,000 refugees in 1948, which is not far from the 680,000 used here. And it is generally agreed that a significant number of these went to live permanently elsewhere in 1948 without having opted for refugee status.

Bin Talal rightly observes (p. 100): "*Whatever the exact numbers of refugees may be, it is clear that their number is huge and that their fate is one of the main threats to peace in the Near East.*" The conclusion is inevitable. The Arab countries do not want peace. They want to exterminate the Jews living in Israel!



CALCULATION OF THE NUMERICAL RESULTS

The implied 'average' fertility rate of the Palestinian refugees is 3.5% p/a

Assumptions:

Refugee population mid-1948 (UN Mediator): 472,000.

Increase of refugee population because of the June 1967-war (Bin Talal): 234,000.

Refugee population end-2006 (UNRWA): 4,448,000.

Calculations:

$$1.035^{19} \times 472 \text{ K} = 875 \text{ K}$$

$$1.035^{39} \times (\text{root } 1.035) \times (875 \text{ K} + 234 \text{ K}) = 4.44 \text{ million}$$

The implied fertility rate of the Palestinian refugees is 3.3% p/a

Assumptions:

Refugee population mid-1948 (Bin Talal): 726,000.

Refugee population mid-1967 (UNRWA): 1,345,000 (before the June-1967 war).

The gap in between 1967 and 1980 is not counted because of emigration.

Refugee population mid-1980 (UNRWA): 1,844,000.

Refugee population end-2006 (UNRWA): 4,448,000.

Calculations:

$$1.033^{19} \times 726 \text{ K} = 1,345 \text{ K}$$

$$1.034^{26} \times (\text{root } 1.034) \times 1,844 \text{ K} = 4.47 \text{ million}$$

$$4.47 \text{ mln} / 4.50 \text{ mln} = 99,3\%$$

Calculated as from 1980, 18.7% of refugees do not belong there

In calculation 7, based on Palestinian growth figures, the 2006 population is 548 K too high, and in calculation 9 an emigration is calculated of 136 K. These two added together are 15.3% of the total population of 4,448,000.

About 663,000 Arabs left the country in the wake of the war

Assumptions:

Fertility rate 3.35% p/a.

Census of November 30, 1947: 809.000 Arabs (standard).

Census of November 8 1948: 160.000 Arabs (very accurate).

Illegal immigration between November 30, 1947

and the start of the war mid-May 1948: 1,000 Arabs.

Casualties of war: about 3,000 Arab residents (Arab casualties from all nations attacking is unknown and are estimated in between 8,000 and 15,000).

General range of estimate of refugees is in between 600,000 en 760,000.

Calculations:

$$(\text{root } 1.0335) \times 809 \text{ K} = 822 \text{ K}$$

$$160 \text{ K} / (\text{root } 1.0335) = 157 \text{ K}$$

$$822 \text{ K} - 157 \text{ K} + 1 \text{ K} - 3 \text{ K} = 663 \text{ K}$$

$$(600 \text{ K} + 760 \text{ K}) / 2 = 680 \text{ K}$$

$$(680 \text{ K} - 663 \text{ K}) / 822 \text{ K} = 2.07\%, \text{ which seems an acceptable margin of error for the 1947 census}$$

$$1.0207 \times 809 \text{ K} = 826 \text{ K (correction upward, instead of 809 K)}$$

Net immigration of 17,800 per annum in between 1948 and 1967

Assumptions:

Fertility rate from 1948 until 2006 is 3.35% p/a.
Refugee population mid-1948 (UN Mediator): 472,000.
Refugee population mid-1967 (UNRWA): 1,345,000.

Calculations:

$1.0335^{19} \times 472 \text{ K} = 883 \text{ K}$
 $1,345 \text{ K} - 883 \text{ K} = 462 \text{ K}$
 $462 \text{ K} / (\text{Summation } [x = 0 \text{ to } x = 18] \text{ of } 1.0335^x) = 17.8 \text{ K}$
 $19 \times 17.8 \text{ K} = 338 \text{ K}$

Net emigration of 34,400 per annum in between 1967 and 1980

Assumptions:

The cummulatif fertility from mid 1968 until mid 1980 is plus 52.3%.
The fertility rate is 3.568% per annum to arrive at plus 52.3%.
Refugee population after June-1967 war (Bin Talal): 1,579,000.
The 1579 K includes the extra refugees of 234 K because of the June-1967 war.
Refugee population mid-1980 (UNRWA): 1,844,000.

Calculations:

$1,579 \text{ K} \times 1.52 = 2,400 \text{ K}$
 $2,400 \text{ K} - 1,844 \text{ K} = 556 \text{ K}$
 $556 \text{ K} / (\text{Summation } [x = 0 \text{ to } x = 12] \text{ of } 1.03568^x) = 34.4 \text{ K}$
 $13 \times 34.4 \text{ K} = 447 \text{ K}$

Net immigration of 14,000 per annum in between 1980 and 2006

Assumptions:

The cummulatif fertility from mid 1980 until end 2006 is plus 111,51%.
The implied average fertility rate is 2.87% per annum.
Refugee population mid-1980 (UNRWA): 1,844,000.
Refugee population end-2006 (UNRWA): 4,448,000.

Calculations:

$2.1151 \times 1844 \text{ K} = 3,900 \text{ million}$
 $4,448 \text{ K} - 3,900 \text{ K} = 548 \text{ K}$
 $548 \text{ K} - y/2 \text{ (or } 7 \text{ K)} / (\text{root } 1.0287) (\text{Summation } [x = 0 \text{ to } x = 25] \text{ of } 1.0287^x) = 14 \text{ K} = y$
 $26.5 \times 14 \text{ K} = 371 \text{ K}$

In 2006 at least 730,000 in the camps did not belong there

Assumptions:

- The following fertility rates are based on the population figures of Jordan.
- The fertility rate of 1948 until 1967 is surmised.
- Only 2006 is end-point, all other years are mid-point.

Fertility rate from 1948 until 1967 is 3.35% p/a - cummulative 187.02 % (A).
Fertility rate from 1967 until 1970 is 3.35% p/a - cummulative 110.39 % (B).
Fertility rate from 1970 until 1975 is 3.70% p/a - cummulative 119.92 % (C).
Fertility rate from 1975 until 1980 is 3.54% p/a - cummulative 119.00 % (D).
Fertility rate from 1980 until 1985 is 3.34% p/a - cummulative 117.85 % (E).

Fertility rate from 1985 until 1990 is 3.17% p/a - cumulative 116.89 % (F).
Fertility rate from 1990 until 1995 is 2.86% p/a - cumulative 115.14 % (G).
Fertility rate from 1995 until 2000 is 2.63% p/a - cumulative 113.86 % (H).
Fertility rate from 2000 until 2006 is 2.37% p/a - cumulative 117.13 % (I).

Refugee population mid-1948 (UN Mediator): 472,000.
Increase of refugee population because of the June 1967-war (Bin Talal): 234,000.
Refugee population end-2006 (UNRWA): 4,448,000.

Calculations:

$(A \times B \times \dots \times H \times I) = 6.232$
 $1.03177^{58.5} = 6.232$
 $A \times 472 \text{ K} = 883 \text{ K}$
 $B \times C \times D \times E \times F \times G \times H \times I \times (883 \text{ K} + 234 \text{ K}) = 3.72 \text{ million}$
 $1 - (3.72 \text{ mln} / 4.45 \text{ mln}) = 16.4\%$
 $4.45 \text{ mln} - 3.72 \text{ mln} = 730 \text{ K}$

In 2006 21% in the camps did not deserve the refugee status

Assumptions:

The fertility rates are taken from the assumptions of the above calculations
Refugee population mid-1948 (UN Mediator): 472,000.
Increase of refugee population because of the June 1967-war (Bin Talal): 234, 000.
Relative decrease of refugee population from 1948 until 1967: 4,500 p/a.
Relative increase of refugee population from 1967 until 1980: 2,900 p/a.
Relative decrease of refugee population from 1980 until 2006: 3,500 p/a.
Refugee population end-2006 (UNRWA): 4,448,000.

Calculations:

$1.0335^{19} \times 472 \text{ K} = 883 \text{ K}$
 $B \times C \times D \times E \times F \times G \times H \times I \times (883 \text{ K} + 234 \text{ K}) = 3.72 \text{ million}$
 $1 - (3.72 \text{ mln} / 4.45 \text{ mln}) = 16.4\%$
 $4.5 \text{ K} \cdot (\text{Summation } [x = 0 \text{ to } x = 18] \text{ of } 1.0335^x) = 117 \text{ K}$
 $2.9 \text{ K} \cdot (\text{Summation } [x = 0 \text{ to } x = 12] \text{ of } 1.0356^x) = 47 \text{ K}$
 $3.5 \text{ K} \cdot (\text{Summation } [x = 0 \text{ to } x = 25] \text{ of } 1.0304^x) = 136 \text{ K}$
 $(117 \text{ K} \times 1.0356^{13} \times 1.0304^{26.5} - (47 \text{ K} \times 1.0304^{26.5}) + 136 \text{ K}) / 4,448 \text{ K} =$
 $(408 \text{ K} - 104 \text{ K} + 136 \text{ K}) / 4,448 \text{ K} = 440 \text{ K} / 4,448 \text{ K} = 9.9\%$
 $16.4\% + 9.9\% = 26.3\%$
 $(4,448 \text{ K} - 3,720 \text{ K}) + 440 \text{ K} = 1,168 \text{ K}$
 $1.17 \text{ million} \times 1.023^3 = 1.25 \text{ million by December 2009}$

If I should forget you, Jerusalem...



The title is taken from Psalm 137, where the captives look back yearningly at the rivers of Babylon – but it may instead mean that it is God who is comforting his people: “If I forget you, Jerusalem, may my right hand forget its skill. May my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth if I do not remember you, if I do not consider Jerusalem my highest joy!” This psalm begs the question: What is the significance of Jerusalem? A good question about a great topic. And thus we are examining its central role in Judaism, Christianity, also as regards its enemies. It traces the deep yearning for Jerusalem in Jewish tradition, exemplified by Judah Halevi and the Passover wish, linking it to themes of redemption and the Messiah’s coming. We further discuss Jerusalem’s importance in Christianity, highlighting its association with Jesus’ life, death, and His promised Return, while also noting its contested status and the impact of historical events like the Crusades. Finally, we touch upon the perspective of God’s adversaries and the enduring Islamic claim to the city.

6.33 – Next Year in Jerusalem!

Judah Halevi is one of Judaism’s greatest literary geniuses whose prose has become a staple in the Jewish liturgy. Above all, he developed a transcendental passion for the Holy Land. His hymns to Zion (a name for Jerusalem) compare in their heart-rending appeal to the greatest love-lyrics in world literature. In 1140 he decided to travel to Jerusalem. After a long journey he finally descried the gates of Jerusalem. It is told that he then flung himself in ecstasy to the ground. A passing Arab spurred his steed over the recumbent body, ...and the poet sobbed out his life with the immortal cadences of his greatest ode to Zion. This story fits perfectly with the Jewish mind. With reason the Jewish Passover meal ends with the collective wish: “Next year in Jerusalem!” Although the wish itself entered the celebration only in the Middle Ages, it resonates thematically with ancient Biblical themes of past and future redemption. On Passover Night, each participant transposes himself to personally experience the physical redemption at the Yam Sof (literally: frontier sea, commonly rendered as ‘Red Sea’). The commentary

says: *"For it was not our forefathers alone whom the Holy One redeemed; He redeemed us, too, with them,"* and, *"In every generation, every individual must experience as if he or she personally came out of Egypt."* Then, as the family ends the meal, they utter this phrase that reaches forward to the coming of the Messiah and their spiritual redemption. Remarkably, Jerusalem and the deliverance from Egyptian slavery, image of demonic tyranny, are under the same constellation. Did not our Lord and Savior perform the atoning sacrifice in Jerusalem for the breaking of this tyranny? We too should always remember that - I am referring to the Sacrifice of the Cross - as if we were eye witnesses. In this sense, Jerusalem is the most important place on earth.



Jerusalem is important not only to the Jews. Its central role is also evident from the place God gives it. We should not be surprised that the Bible teaches that this town and its planet are at the center of the universe. And of course, it is that same city Jesus promised to return to and from there reign over the world. In Ezekiel 5:5, the prophet quotes God as saying: *"This is Jerusalem; I have set her at the center of the nations."* In chapter 38 the Jewish people are pictured as those who live at the *"center of the universe."* Actually, it reads *"the navel of the universe"*. A navel represents the life transferring principle from the days of old (Christ is the life giving principle).

In Jerusalem the glory of God rests on Mount Moriah, the place where Abraham once bound Isaac and heard that on this place God would provide. It was also the threshing floor of the Jebusite Arauna who King David bought from him to build a house there for the creator of the Universe. The Talmud states that this temple was built on the cornerstone of the earth or the 'Even ha-Shtiyya' (אבן השתייה), also called Axis Mundi, and that from there the ladder reaches down to the Heavenly. It is certain that 'here' God walked with Adam and that 'here' was the place of the earthly paradise. When God leaves the city, the garden becomes desolate and empty again (Jer. 4:23), but when He returns with His beloved people, the wilderness regains the splendor of the original 'Garden of Eden', as Paradise is also called.

The prophecy which tells that the Messiah will return to Jerusalem can be found in Zechariah 14. It tells that when Jerusalem is about to be overpowered by the God's hostile armies, the Messiah will return to the Mount of Olives, and will intervene as God intervened at the Red Sea (the usual Jewish explanation of verse 3). Again, a critical border situation presents itself. It is all or nothing! Zechariah foretells that when the Messiah's

feet touch the Mount⁶⁵⁾ a great earthquake will split the mountain in two, and judgment will be meted out to the enemies. From that day on and from that town Jesus will reign over all the earth. The prophecy is that Christ will return to earth to gather a people from all nations and languages, but first of all the Jewish people whom He has redeemed with his Blood. On that day the truth will shine like crystal. In that day, says Zechariah (12:10), God will pour out upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplications, and there will be a lamentation as people weep bitterly over their firstborn. Isaiah 62 is the chapter in which God sings his love for Jerusalem and it ends with: *“Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world: Say to the daughter of Zion, behold, thy Redeemer cometh; behold, a reward to them that do his word is with Him, and all their works are manifest before Him. And they shall call them The Holy People, the Redeemed of the Lord, and you shall be called Sought Out, A City Not Forsaken!”* (cf. John Gill’s Exposition of the Bible)

During the Six Day War, a war not sought by Israel, the state was presented on a platter with the city – which, until then, had been under Jordanian rule. This can be seen as a miracle, a gift of God. That is how many in Israel see it. Jerusalem was reconquered on 7th June 1967 by Moshje Dayan. His first official words were: *“We have returned to all that is holy in our land. We have returned never to be parted from it again.”* Here I write quite deliberately ‘reconquered’ rather than ‘conquered’. Interestingly, the establishment of the State of Israel nineteen years earlier was not religiously inspired, although the protagonists were aware of the thousands of years of history that had preceded it. But they did not see that as God’s history, but their history. That is why the Orthodox Jews also distanced themselves from this initiative. God could never have wanted that! This made the reconquest of Jerusalem such a historically momentous moment for it made the faithful Jews rethink things. God’s instruments did not necessarily have to be holy, they concluded. Was King Cyrus, who felt called to have the Temple rebuilt, a faithful Jew? That happened after 70 years of Babylonian captivity. The exile had now lasted nearly 2,000 years, but that didn’t change the matter.

To the question *“Why do you Jews insist on Palestine when there are so many undeveloped countries you could settle in more conveniently?”*, Chaim Weizmann replied: *“That is like my asking you why you drove twenty miles to visit your mother last Sunday when there are so many old ladies living on your street.”*

6.34 – City of the Antichrist, but also Christian City

Of course, if Jerusalem is so important to God, it is also important to God’s enemies, who love nothing more than its destruction. Without a fight the Turkish troops had evacuated the Holy City in 1917. They had planned to put the town under heavy mortar fire after the British Egyptian Expeditionary Force had entered it, which, however, they were unable to do because of a new tactical weapon of the English: the plane! Jerusalem also plays a central part in the legend of Hiram Abiff, who is a typos of Lucifer and his aide-de-camp the Antichrist. Their reign is founded on the triple alliance of heresy, schism and occultism, which is expressed by the Freemason’s Temple of Jerusalem, that supposedly is going to be rebuilt by Hiram Abiff. This strange figure dominates the ritual

65) That is why the Mount of Olives is covered with tens of thousands of tombs of people who want to be the first to arise and witness Christ’s glorious coming. (Christ is Greek for the Hebrew Messiah.) Rabbi Meir is known to sit upright in his tomb so as not to miss any of the spectacle...

where the apprentice is to become a third degree Master. At a certain moment of the ritual, the Master of Ceremony shouts “*Mac Benac!*”, which is an acronym for “*Movebor Adversus Christum Bellum Eternum Nam Antichristus Consurrexit*”, or “I will promote an eternal war against Christ, because here the Antichrist has risen”. The apprentice is left in the dark about its meaning, which is only known to the highest in rank.

The center of Christianity may have been in the Middle Ages in Rome and Constantinople, but Jerusalem was not forgotten: it is there that the Lord walked in human form, it is there that He was crucified to the salvation of the world right on top of Adam’s grave (a common opinion then), and it was there that He was buried and resurrected will come back to the exactly the same place where He ascended to heaven. In fact, the Church had adopted the Jewish Bible and presented itself as ‘the true Israel’. That Bible conveyed the eminent meaning of Jerusalem. According to that line of thought, it was bound to be that Jerusalem is a Christian city, so much so that if it were not in Christian hands, the Lord could not possibly return. Although the Islamic powers were in charge, it always remained a popular pilgrimage site, with a visit to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher as number one on the program. The Muslims respected that until Fatimid Caliph Al-Hakim carried out the total destruction of this church. We write in the year 1009. Fortunately, the reconstruction started fifteen years later with the permission of the new caliph. However, the situation remained tense.

The European reaction to this destruction was one of shock and dismay, with far-reaching consequences. Cluniac monk Rodulfus Glaber blamed the Jews, which resulted in the expulsion of Jews were from Limoges and other French towns. This ultimately gave an impetus to the Crusades. It was clear that action had to be taken; the situation became increasingly dire, especially after the rise of the fierce and cruel Seljuk Turks.⁶⁶⁾ The Seljuks originally came from Central Asia from an area west of Mongolia. In 1071 the Battle of Manzikert took place in Turkey in which the Byzantines were defeated by the Seljuks. After this victory, they embarked on an unstoppable advance that led to the ‘Great Seljuk Empire’ within which - as early as 1073 - Palestine was situated with its great city.



Saladin – painted by Jason Zhou

In 1094, the Byzantine emperor begged the Pope for assistance in his fight against the Seljuk Turks, who had conquered almost all of Asia Minor from him. At the Council of Clermont in 1095, Pope Urban addressed a large crowd and urged all to free the ‘Greeks’ from the yoke of the Mohammedan ‘infidels’. The acts of that council have been lost, but we have five accounts of the speech, recorded by people present at the time. Fulcher of Chartres noted that the Pope said: “*Anyone who perishes on the way, whether on land or at sea or in the battle against the Gentiles, will receive immediate remission of his sins. I grant this by virtue of the power with which God has invested me.*” The term martyrdom is used elsewhere. What is lacking in the document that has come to us is a

66) The Seljuks have wreaked havoc in a more than terrible way, among the Muslims too, but in Islamic literature no evil is said about it because they were Islamic ‘brothers’.

restrictive provision that bloodshed should be avoided as much as possible at all times and everywhere and that killing for the sake of killing does not justify the killer, even during a just or holy war.

During the Crusades, enmity against the Jews radicalized. Initially intended to resist the savage advance of the Seljuk Turks, the Crusades' main goal soon changed in the liberation of Jerusalem. The Jews in the trough areas were easy prey. Because the Jew was stubborn and a guilty enemy of God, so it was thought, repentance was impossible, and any dead Jew was better than a living one. Jerusalem was conquered from the Fatimids in 1099 (the Fatimids had driven out the Seljuks in the previous year). The Jews were gathered into the synagogue and burned alive while the soldiers marched around with the song: "*Christ we worship You.*" Muslims were also slaughtered. It was no better during the Second Crusade (1144-47). A certain Rodolphe proclaimed that it was better to keep a crusade at home than in distant lands. His preaching led to a massacre of the Jews in many major European cities.

Nearly a hundred years later, in 1187, Jerusalem is recaptured by the Fatimid-faithful Saladin. That heralded the end of the Christian 'Kingdom of Jerusalem'. This reign was relatively short, as in 1260 the Mongols overpowered Jerusalem. They were Nestorian Christians. They sent an envoy to the French king with the message that Jerusalem was once again under Christendom. That was highly optimistic because that same year they were beaten away by the Egyptian Mamluks a little north of Jerusalem (a kind of mercenaries). This is known as one of the most important battles in history. Seven years later the great Talmudist Rambam goes to Jerusalem and prays at the Wailing Wall. He reports to have found only two Jewish families in the city! He founded the Ramban Synagogue that is still used today.

In 1243, the Seljuks, who had disintegrated into states, were defeated by the Islamic Mongols at Kösedag on the Turkish north coast. From that victory, the Ottoman Empire arose along the way. In 1516 the Ottomans expelled the Mamlukes from Jerusalem. They remained in charge there until 1917, as has already been mentioned. In 1482 the Dominican monk Felix Fabri visits Jerusalem, which he describes as "*a collection of all manner of abominations*". As 'abominations' he lists Saracens, Greeks, Syrians, Jacobites, Abyssinians, Nestorians, Armenians, Gregorians, Maronites, Turcomans, Bedouins, Assassins, a sect - possibly Druzes, Mamelukes, and "*the most accursed of all, Jews*". Only the Latin Christians "*long with all their hearts for Christian princes to come, who will subject the whole country to the authority of the Church of Rome*". Unfortunately, he thus interpreted an opinion prevailing at the time.

For Muslims, once conquered territory, always remains Islamic territory. Erdoğan therefore sees himself as a genuine Ottoman sultan and has only one desire: to restore that old empire with all its horrors, where Israel will be nothing more than an insignificant and half-deserted villayet (administrative unity). Whoever has eyes to see let him see!



APPENDIX 10

20 Years of Research Reveals: Jerusalem Belongs to the Jews

21 Shevat 5768, 28 January 2008

by Hillel Fendel

Jacques Paul Gauthier, a non-Jewish Canadian lawyer spent 25 years conducting research into the conflicting claims to Jerusalem under international law. He concluded: “Jerusalem belongs to the Jews, by international law.” Gauthier has written a doctoral dissertation on the topic of Jerusalem and its legal history, based on international treaties and resolutions of the past 90 years. The dissertation, published in book form, runs 1142 pages, with 3000 footnotes. Gauthier first had to present his thesis to a world-famous Jewish historian and two leading international lawyers – the Jewish one of whom had represented the Palestinian Authority on numerous occasions.

Gauthier’s main point in “Sovereignty over the Old City of Jerusalem”, as summarized by Israpundit editor Ted Belman, is that a non-broken series of treaties and resolutions, as laid out by the San Remo Resolution, the League of Nations and the United Nations, gives the Jewish People title to the city of Jerusalem. The process began at San Remo, Italy, when the four Principal Allied Powers of World War I – Great Britain, France, Italy and Japan – agreed to create a Jewish national home in what is now the Land of Israel.

The San Remo resolution – 25 April 1920

The relevant resolution reads as follows:

«« The High Contracting Parties agree to entrust... the administration of Palestine, within such boundaries as may be determined by the Principal Allied Powers, to a Mandatory [authority that] will be responsible for putting into effect the [Balfour] declaration (...) in favour of the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people. »»

Gauthier notes that the San Remo treaty specifically notes that “*nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine*” – but says nothing about any ‘political’ rights of the Arabs living there.

The San Remo Resolution also bases itself on Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, which declares that it is a “*a sacred trust of civilization*” to provide for the well-being and development of colonies and territories whose inhabitants are “*not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world.*” Specifically, a resolution was formulated to create a Mandate to form a Jewish national home in Palestine.

League of Nations

The League of Nations’ resolution creating the Palestine Mandate, included the following significant clause: “*Whereas recognition has thereby been given to the historical connection of the Jewish people with Palestine and to the grounds for reconstituting their national home in that country.*” No such recognition of Arab rights in Palestine was granted.

In 1945, the United Nations took over from the failed League of Nations – and assumed the latter's obligations. Article 80 of the UN Charter states:

«« Nothing in this Chapter shall be construed, in or of itself, to alter in any manner the rights whatsoever of any states or any peoples or the terms of existing international instruments to which Members of the United Nations may respectively be parties. »»

UN Partition Plan

However, in 1947, the General Assembly of the UN passed Resolution 181, known as the Partition Plan. It violated the League of Nations' Mandate for Palestine in that it granted political rights to the Arabs in western Palestine – yet, ironically, the Arabs worked to thwart the plan's passage, while the Jews applauded it.

Resolution 181 also provided for a Special regime for Jerusalem, with borders delineated in all four directions: the then-extant municipality of Jerusalem plus the surrounding villages and towns up to Abu Dis in the east, Bethlehem in the south, Ein Karem and Motza in the west, and Shuafat in the north.

Referendum Scheduled for Jerusalem

The UN resolved that the City of Jerusalem shall be established as a separate entity under a special international regime and shall be administered by the United Nations. The regime was to come into effect by October 1948, and was to remain in force for a period of ten years, unless the UN's Trusteeship Council decided otherwise. After the ten years, the residents of Jerusalem "*shall be then free to express by means of a referendum their wishes as to possible modifications of regime of the City.*" The resolution never took effect, because Jordan controlled eastern Jerusalem after the 1948 War of Independence and did not follow its provisions.

After 1967

After the Six Day War in 1967, Israel regained Jerusalem and other land west of Jordan. Gauthier notes that the UN Security Council then passed Resolution 242 authorizing Israel to remain in possession of all the land until it had "*secure and recognized boundaries.*" The resolution was notably silent on Jerusalem, and also referred to the "*necessity for achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem*", with no distinction made between Jewish and Arab refugees.

Given Jerusalem's strong Jewish majority, Gauthier concludes, Israel should be demanding that the long-delayed referendum on the city's future be held as soon as possible. Not only should Israel be demanding that the referendum be held now, Jerusalem must also be the first priority. "*Olmert is sloughing us off by saying – as he did before the Annapolis Conference two months earlier: 'Jerusalem is not on the table yet'.*" Gauthier underlines: "*He should demand that the referendum take place before the balance of the land is negotiated. If the Arabs won't agree to have the referendum, there is nothing to talk about.*"

APPENDIX 11

MUSLIM'S PLAN ABORTED : THE DESTRUCTION OF ISRAEL

It was 38 years ago in 1967 at the end of May and in early June that the Muslim Arab enemies of Israel surrounded Israel on all sides. Their goal was to start another war against the people of G-d. They were sure that they could finally bring about their main goal of destroying Israel. They also blocked the Straits of Tiran, which is the gate to the Gulf of Aqaba. It was a time of weakness among the Israeli leadership who even sent a message to Muslim King Hussein of Jordan [a part of the land promised by G-d to the ancient people of Israel where 2½ tribes, Gad, Reuven and Manasseh lived at the time, which will be part again of 'the land' as G-d promised] not to attack Israel and Jerusalem, in return for which they would not order the Israeli army to liberate Biblical Jerusalem. However, G-d had other plans for Israel and Jerusalem and for the land. He placed in the mind of Muslim King Hussein to attack Israel and the Temple Mount. Jerusalem, Judaea, Samaria and Gaza and the Golan Heights and the Sinai peninsula were liberated exactly as G-d planned for his people. This war was not merely an accident but a war of G-d to return the Biblical and holy areas of the land, which for such a long time had been under Muslim Arab occupation, and to start the second stage of his end-time plans to rebuild the Temple and to make the prophecies of Isaiah and Micah a reality in our lifetime.

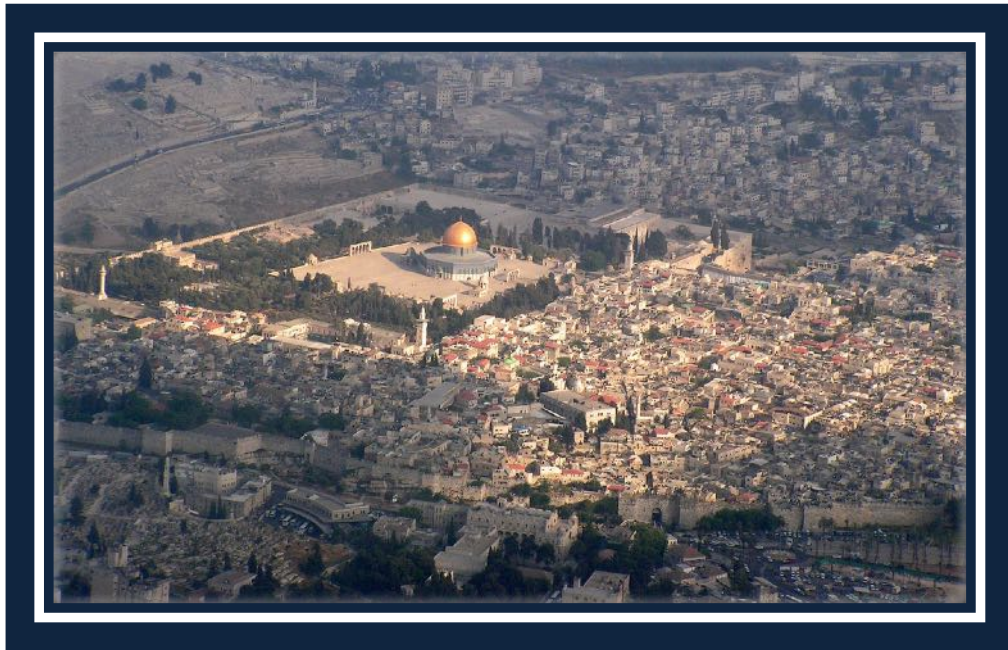
TEMPLE MOUNT AGAIN IN OUR HANDS — THEIR PURPOSE FAILED

I had the greatest privilege of my life to be with the unit of paratroopers which I commanded together with the other paratroop units which liberated the Temple Mount and the Biblical Jerusalem. It was after a critical time in my life after I had been seriously wounded in a battle in the Golan Heights against the Syrian enemy which had attacked the Israeli villages. In a great miracle, G-d, together with his brave Israeli soldiers, defeated the Syrians and saved my life. He appeared in my life on that critical day and promised me that He had not yet finished with me but that He had something great for me to do in my life. He surrounded me with his angels as the Syrians later testified. They told the UN observers that they saw the angels with their own eyes. After a year in hospital with terrible pains and struggling together with G-d, who stood with me to recover and to be ready for what He would tell me to do, I volunteered back to my unit using 2 crutches and G-d continued to heal me. In the Six-Day War I could already walk with one cane. The day of the liberation of the Temple Mount on wednesday June 7, when I excitedly stood with tears in my eyes together with the Israeli forces, 200 of whom who had sacrificed themselves for the G-d of Israel, his holy mountain and the city in the battle for Ammunition Hill and on the way to the Temple Mount and the Biblical Jerusalem, was an unforgettable day and a godly moment. Life stopped at this moment all over Israel when everyone heard General Motta Gur declare over the radio at quarter past ten in the morning: *"The Temple Mount is again in our hands"*. For almost two thousand years my people had dreamt of and prayed for this moment and here it had become a reality. We felt as if we were in the midst of a dream but it was reality. Like the soldiers around me, I felt the presence of G-d in my heart, soul and spirit and I could hear Him telling me that for that moment He had saved my life and that I now should build His house.

These two godly events in my life became the motivation of my existence as G-d expected of me. I consider it the greatest privilege that someone can have in his or her life. I answered the expectations on my behalf of my beloved G-d and I humbly said to Him that I was ready and that He should send me.

From: "The Jerusalem Day Festival Parade to the Temple Mount" by Generaal Motta Gur (1930-'95) - The Temple Mount and Land of Israel Faithful Movement # Year 5765 / Gregorian 2005.

Israël and World Politics Anno 2011



Jerusalem 'Old Town' by Justa Vessel

The provided text offers a critical perspective on the historical and political complexities surrounding the establishment of the State of Israel and the related ongoing conflicts. It argues that due to a lack of realism and political insight, the Arab countries have sidetracked themselves during the early negotiations, and that still the demands from the Arab side do not testify to political realism. The author posits that Israel is an exceptional nation facing unique challenges and that numerous peace initiatives have failed due to an unbalanced international approach, often holding Israel to different standards than usual in the international fore. Furthermore, the text examines the evolving concept of 'Palestine' and the refugee issue, indicating that the latter was politically motivated. Finally, the piece explores Israel's security concerns, particularly regarding defensible borders, and critiques the international community's anti-Zionist sentiments and the 'land for peace' principle.

7.35 – Israël, a 'people in the time'

Israel is not a country like any other. Although she tries to be a 'normal state', she keeps getting her nose pressed to the fact that it is not. One question: does a normal state exist? Every state is a piece of regulated society with civil servants, awkward customs officials, disagreeable policemen, terrible taxes and so on. But in essence it is a culturally charged and passionate institution, for which someone wants to give his life in given circumstances. As the columnist and Israel friend G.B.J. Hiltermann pointed out at the time, they are almost all the highest individual collective expression of illusions and longings, of the potential and history of its people. In his "Collected Notes" from 1974 Hiltermann wrote:

«« Every state somewhat resembles an artwork. States can inspire people to hefty outpourings – and still can. No wonder that Providence was long considered the only founder of states. A state cannot be compared with an association representing the interests of its members. Secular states do not exist, at least not

for long. This applies all the more so to Israel. For more than one reason! The first is that this is an exceptional nation. The Jewish people are not the only ones who have managed for centuries to remain in existence without having their own state. That is also the case with the Basques, the Druses, the Kurds – and perhaps we should also reckon the Armenians and Lithuanians in this group. However, none of these peoples were scattered. Only the Jewish people were scattered all over the world – as a people in time, as the Spanish diplomat Salvador de Madariaga once said – and yet succeeded to maintain its special characteristics and properties. »»

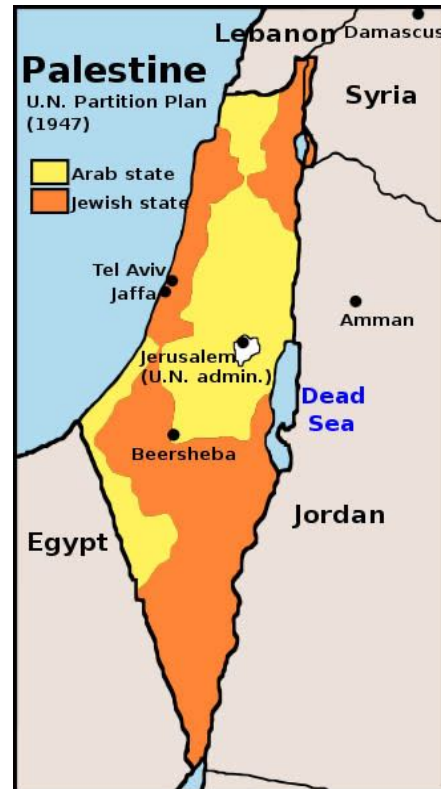
7.36 – All Peace Plans Fail

Peace is the work of justice. This is a so-called binomium, a concept consisting of two inseparable concepts, based here on the saying of the prophet Isaiah (Is. 32:19): *“The product of righteousness shall bring peace; and the effect of righteousness, quiet and security forever!”* Peace is not ‘fabricated’, but is the result of ethical action. Peace does not follow from lofty principles that one wants to apply to the other, but are conveniently set aside for oneself.

When Muslim Palestinians commit outrageous crimes, it is explained away, because that would stem from their desperate situation... as if despair automatically leads to suicide bombings. However, this practice does not arise out of despair, but follows the directions of the religious-political booklet, the Quran, which stubbornly has manifested itself for centuries. Contrary to popular belief, Palestinian Authority terrorists are motivated by a religious ideology and not primarily by nationalist feelings nor personal suffering, as was substantiated by PA researcher Bassam Yousef Banat in 2010. He found that most suicide killers were educated and came from middle-class backgrounds and had no significant physical or psychological ailments. While most had jobs, they were not the primary providers for their families. An authority on what moves the Muslims is Mustafa Mashur, who was the leader of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt from 1996 until his death in 2002. In 1995, he published *“Jihad is the Way”*, in which he states (ch. 5): *“The youth should know that the problems of the Islamic world, such as Palestine, Afghanistan, Syria, Eritrea, or the Philippines, are not issues of territories and nations, but of faith and religion.”*

While people show comprehension for the crimes of Muslim Palestinians, it is quite different with regard to the Jews. Strangely enough, people set different standards of conduct for Israel’s actions. If Israel commits a mistake or alleged misstep, one speaks before the forum of the nations of ‘crimes against humanity’. This unbalanced approach is the cause of the failure of every peace initiative.

I am speaking here of Muslim Palestinians. A Jewish friend, whose family has lived in Jerusalem for many generations, has a 1930s certificate stating that his (Jewish) father is a Palestinian. It is striking that the term Palestinian was scrupulously avoided in the diplomatic talks in the 1940s. In the thinking of the Muslim there was no room for Jews in the future Palestine. They wanted to exclude the Jewish Palestinians, and therefore they only spoke of Jews and Arabs. Only many years later was the term Palestinian reintroduced.



duced, but in a different connotation. Now, no one thinks of a Jew when the Palestinian is talked about, implicitly creating a false contradiction between the Palestinians on the one hand and the Jews who would have chased them away.

Until the late 1980s, Jordan's Hashemite rulers stressed on numerous occasions that their country was Palestine. In the year 1965, for instance, King Hussein said: *"Those organizations which seek to differentiate between Palestinians and Jordanians are traitors."* And at the end of 1981, he stated: *"Jordan is Palestine and Palestine is Jordan."* In March 1971, The Palestine National Council stated that *"what links Jordan to Palestine is a national bond, (...) formed since time immemorial by history and culture. The establishment of one political entity in Transjordan (now called Jordan) and another in Palestine is illegal."* Only in the late seventies the Arab leaders began to differentiate between Jordanians and Palestinians. What was previously considered treason, suddenly became the official line. In a candid interview in 1977, Zahir Muhsein (also Zuheir Mohsen), who was a key member of the PLO's executive committee or Palestine Liberation Organization, acknowledged: (in the Dutch daily newspaper Trouw on March 31st 1977)



Demonstration in Tel Aviv for the Geneva Initiative

«« The Palestinian people does not exist. The creation of a Palestinian state is only a means of continuing our struggle against the State of Israel for our Arab unity. In reality, there is no difference today between Jordanians, Palestinians, Syrians and Lebanese. Today we speak of the existence of a Palestinian people only for political and tactical reasons because national Arab interests require that we posit the existence of a separate 'Palestinian people' to oppose Zionism. For tactical reasons, Jordan, a sovereign state with defined borders, cannot claim Haifa and Jaffa, while as a Palestinian, I can no doubt claim Haifa, Jaffa, Beersheba and Jerusalem. However, the moment we reclaim our right to all of Palestine, we will not hesitate even for a minute to unite Palestine and Jordan. »» ⁶⁷⁾

Without pretending to be exhaustive, the list of peace initiatives after the Yom Kippur War is as follows: the Camp David Accords in 1978; in 1982, in response to the Libanon

67) Arabs and Muslims under the Ottoman Rule did not commonly use the term Palestine. For them the region, which is now Israel, was an indistinct part of a larger geographical whole, identified as the Land of Damascus or Greater Syria, in a free translation of Bilad ash-Sham (literally: the Orient or Levant). The vast expanse of Greater Syria included not only greater Palestine (including Jordan), but also present day Syria and the Lebanon. The Ottoman Empire did not have a territorial division of any name that corresponded in its boundaries, even roughly, to those of the Palestine Mandate, that was set up by the Western Powers in 1920. In the 19th century and earlier the land was allotted between the vilayets (provinces) of Beirut and Damascus, and only during the Crimean War, in the middle of the 19th century, a separate unit was created for Jerusalem that until then had belonged to the Damascus vilayet. Arab spokespersons therefore argued at the 1947 UN hearings that Palestine west of the Jordan, which was then a mandate territory, never existed and should never come into being as an independent nation. In this light, Zahir Muhsein's statement becomes understandable. See also Yasser Arafat's authorized biography: "Arafat: Terrorist or Peacemaker?" by Alan Hart - Sidgwick & Jackson Ltd # 1984.

War, the Reagan Peace Plan was formulated; in 1991 there was the Madrid Conference; the Oslo Accords were in 1993; the Wye River Memorandum dates from 1998; in 2000 there were three: the Camp David Summit, the Clinton Peace Plan and the Mitchell Commission (Plan); the year following there were two initiatives: the Tenet Plan and the Taba Summit; in 2002 even six: the Zinni Plan, the Elon Peace Plan, the Arab Peace Initiative, the Nusseibeh-Ayalon Principles, the The People's Voice and finally the Saudi Peace Initiative. Then it became more quiet with in 2003 the Geneva Initiative. And finally there was in 2005 the Sharm el-Sheikh Summit and the year following the Franco-Italian-Spanish Middle East Peace Plan. (What happened after 2011 is beyond our scope.)

At the end of 2008, Ehud Olmert's proposal for a Palestinian state is rejected. The Jerusalem Post of May 24, 2013 said that in Sept. 2008 Prime Minister Ehud Olmert presented a far-reaching proposal for an independent Palestinian state to Mahmoud Abbas, then chairman of the Palestinian Authority. Abbas, however, was afraid to accept the proposal that the Palestinian state would gain sovereignty over part of Jerusalem, including the Old City and the Temple Mount, and all of Judea and Samaria. Olmert wanted to keep a few large villages with Israel, but he offered to compensate for that with Israeli territory for the new Palestinian state. Five thousand refugees would also be allowed to return. When Olmert wanted to formalize the agreements, Abbas did not give in. And finally, in 2009 there was a voluminous book with thirteen appendices on the Geneva initiative.

Without exception, all peace plans insist on the theme of land division. That means that the Palestinians and Jews each get their enclaves in a kind of patchwork quilt (the Partition Plan). The first partition plan came in 1937 from the Peel Commission, quickly followed by other proposals, such as from the Woodhead Commission. England continued to covertly oppose any proposal to give the Jews a homeland. No stone was left unturned to thwart a peaceful coexistence between Jews and Arabs. English politics sowed winds of hatred and storms were reaped.

7.37 – Israel, an Independent State

The United Nations partition plan was adopted in 1947, just five months before the birth of the new State (33 votes in favor, 13 against and 10 abstentions). Unfortunately, Britain's elite obstinately refused to hand over the mandate in an orderly fashion, that was granted to them in 1922. The United Kingdom refused to implement the UN partition plan on a fallacy that it would be unacceptable to both sides. It refused to share the administration of Palestine with the UN Palestine Commission during the transitional period and announced its intention to unilaterally withdraw from Palestine on 15 May 1948, which set the stage for the Establishment of the State of Israel by the Jewish People's Council on the previous day. During their withdrawal, the British refused to hand over any authority to anyone. What an embarrassment!

During the mandate over Palestine, the Rothschilds, a highly influential family in the political system, through their controlled public media, have always supported the English governmental policy of handing over the mandated region to the Arabs, who moved in clandestinely in large numbers. But that was tolerated. The Rothschilds, with the exception of Lord Nathan († 1915), were integrists. They wanted, and still do, that the Jews assimilate with the nations and disappear from the scene. The British Foreign Secretary, Ernest Bevin, played a particularly detrimental role in this during the dawn of Israel's independence. He allowed weaponry to enter Palestine clandestinely, knowing that it would be used for Arab terrorism. Already in 1929, the Hope Simpson Commission put its finger on the sore spot, when investigating the cause of the Hebron and Safed

massacres. Abraham's tomb is located in Hebron and Safed is one of the four holy cities in Israel and has always served as an important center for spiritual deepening. The Commission found that the British practice of permitting illegal Arab immigration disadvantaged land-seeking Jewish immigrants. At the beginning of the mandate, the situation was still fairly stable thanks to Lord Herbert Samuel, the first High Commissioner of Palestine (and the scribe's distant uncle). He left in 1925. Complaints were voiced at the time of his appointment that he was a Zionist friend and that, rather than representing the interests of the British government, he would only tend to the Jewish cause.

In our time, no country needs to hide its anti-Zionist sentiments. It is now good practice to kick Israel's shins. After the January 2009 Gaza War (operation 'Cast Lead'), another example was given of the relentless smear against Israel. I am referring to the UN Goldstone report denying Israel's right to self-defense.⁶⁸⁾ The most recent machinations relate to an incident involving the Turkish passenger ship, the Mavi Marmara, which entered Israeli-controlled territorial waters in the spring of 2010 and was bent on a violent confrontation. But who was accused when people died and who had to face international political and public outrage? Of course, Israel.

The November 1947 UN Partition Plan, known as Resolution 181, deviated greatly from what was agreed in the mandate officially recognized by the League of Nations in 1922. Still, the Jewish leaders agreed. The horrific tragedy is that the Partition Plan was rejected by the Muslim Palestinians and surrounding Arabs. The historical weight of that moment eluded them. The mixed Jewish-Islamic state was not negotiable for them. However one may think about the Jewish presence in what is now called Israel and about the rights of one population group against another, it is indefensible on historical grounds that the Jews would have taken the land from the Palestinians. Besides, in politics people are used to looking for solutions from an existing situation. The question of who belongs where is a political consideration, but certainly not decisive. If they say otherwise, that is a facade, because in politics realities apply and not 'wishful thinking'. Regardless of its history, the status quo cannot be ignored. It was only after the Yom Kippur war, the third where Israel fought for its bare existence, that the Arabs and Muslim Palestinians realized that the Jews had gained a long-standing place in that part of the world. Only then did the pursuit of a two-state solution appear on their political agenda.

Less than half a year after the Arab rejection of the UN Partition Plan, David Ben Gurion read the declaration of independence of the new republic called Israel. A few minutes later, the US President de facto recognized the State of Israel (followed by a de jure recognition after their first elections). That same day, the Shah of Iran recognized the new state. However, Iran had voted against the UN Partition Plan. Guatemala, Iceland, Nicaragua, Romania and Uruguay followed. Three days later, the Soviet Union became the first country to recognize Israel de jure, followed by Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Ireland and South Africa. In May 1949 Israel became a full member of the United Nations.

It was the Arabs themselves who, by their reluctance, were the cause of the creation of the new republic. The Concert of the Nations understood and accepted that well, not because it felt sorry for the survivors of the Shoa (Holocaust), but because it saw its political expediency and fairness, for many countries recognized Israel without any historical connection with Judaism.

68) Like EU Member States, Israel, along with Switzerland, Canada, Korea and Japan, has refused to cooperate with the Goldstone Commission because of their bias. The terms of the commission's mandate were set by the UN human rights organization, where the Arabs are in charge. One of the committee members, Professor Chinkin, had already indicated, before the investigation began, that Israel was to blame.

7.38 – *The right to ‘safe borders’*

The question that arises is why Israel is now opposed to a two-state solution when it was an acceptable option at the time. This has to do with the speed and scope of the modern means of war, which redefined safe boundaries. After the Six Day War of 1967, the UN Security Council reiterated the old principle that Israel is entitled to defensible borders.⁶⁹⁾ But what exactly are Israel’s defensible borders and security needs in the present environment? I would like to stress, before answering this question, that ‘defensible borders’ is a relative concept. In terms of a full scale war, there are no defensible borders and many other factors come into play. But that, everyone will understand.



Photo Nir Ben-Yosef

Most important is the Jordan Valley, a geological rift at Israel’s eastern frontier, forming a natural frontier with the countries Jordan, Syria, Iraq and Iran with a steep barrier of up to 1,300 meters. This wall gives easy surveillance of clandestine efforts to import weapons to be used against Israel’s civilian population. The Gaza experience illustrates that this kind of surveillance is critical. The so-called Philadelphi Corridor between Gaza and the Egyptian frontier is used extensively for the transport into Gaza of tons of weaponry. The Jordan Valley is the equivalent to the Philadelphi Corridor. To defend itself, Israel must retain control over the Jordan Valley. Only 70 kilometers separate the Jordan Valley and the Mediterranean Sea. Between the Jordan Valley and Jerusalem lies the mountain ridge which reaches up to 1,000 meters above sea level. It offers ideal launching sites for primitive rockets and shoulder launched rockets into Israel’s residential areas, also reaching into its

69) In the heated indignation about the Jewish settlements in so-called ‘occupied territory’, reference is repeatedly made to the “UN Resolution 242 of Nov. 22, 1967”, which allegedly demands to evict all territories occupied in 1967. However, the resolution does not speak of ‘the’ occupied territories. The article is missing and that is telling. Israel has given back a number of territories, such as the Sinai, since 1967. Still, the international community, fueled by the press, is demanding that Israel leave all areas occupied during the Six Day War. For the sake of convenience, one important passage from this resolution is forgotten: “The Security Council acknowledges (...) of every State in the area – (and so Israel too) – that it has the right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force.”

coastal region. This ridge stretches all along the West Bank. From the West Bank frontier to the coast is less than 15 kilometers and in those terms impossible to defend.

Any arrangement must therefore include Israeli control over key areas of the mountain ridge, which by extension also applies to the Golan Heights (north of the Jordan Valley), and must include a demilitarized Palestinian state under Israeli surveillance, which conditions are *prima facie* unacceptable to the other party.⁷⁰⁾ A demilitarized West Bank is reminiscent of 'no military powers'. However, modern military violence takes place with easily deployable means. In the beginning, we are talking about April 2001, the missiles were still extremely primitive and did not reach beyond the border points. But here too, an unmistakable trend is noticeable towards increasing sophistication. The launch of portable missiles can only be prevented if the State of Israel maintains a permanent force in the area that controls the movements of the hostile Arabs, and that is precisely what makes an 'independent Palestinian State' a joke. That explains why 'land for peace', which is the adage of partition, is unrealistic and why its implementation calls for trouble. As President Kennedy said: *"Our goal is not the victory of might, but the vindication of right; not peace at the expense of freedom, but both peace and freedom."*⁷¹⁾

Here is the view of the Pulitzer Prize commentator Charles Krauthammer. His weekly column appears in "The Washington Post" and is syndicated to more than 200 newspapers and media outlets. The following is from his column of May 27, 2011:

«« Every Arab-Israeli negotiation contains a fundamental asymmetry: Israel gives up land, which is tangible; the Arabs make promises, which are ephemeral. The longstanding American solution has been to nonetheless urge Israel to take risks for peace while America balances things by giving assurances of U.S. support for Israel's security and diplomatic needs. It's on the basis of such solemn assurances that Israel undertook, for example, the Gaza withdrawal (in 2006). In order to mitigate this risk, President George W. Bush gave a written commitment that America supported Israel absorbing major settlement blocs in any peace agreement, opposed any return to the 1967 lines and stood firm against the so-called Palestinian right of return to Israel. »» See also the article in the Arutz Sheva newspaper of April 17, 2011 by Maayana Miskin: "Ten Years Under Rocket Fire".

In addition, there is also a need for consistent airspace control. An enemy plane can cross the country in four minutes. In less than two minutes it can cover the 10 miles to Jerusalem. Israel must be able to identify a hostile aircraft before it crosses the Jordan Valley and intercept it shortly thereafter. For its defense, Israel must dominate the airspace over the West Bank and that can only be done within borders that reach to the Jordan Valley. See also on YouTube: "Israel's critical security needs for a Viable Peace".

Finally, it should be noted that it is insufficient to establish secure borders around Israel without guaranteeing peace and tranquility 'within' these borders, the security between citizens. Yoel Zilberman, founder of the HaShomer HaHadash self defense unit, told a Jerusalem conference in November 2010 that pilots from Nevatim airbase in the Negev, southeast of Be'er Sheva, have been ordered to take a detour to their base. because the ordinary road towards Arad suffers too much from terrorist attacks by the Bedouin tribes

70) The Golan-Jerusalem Referendum Law of 2010 blocks any surrender of United Jerusalem or the strategic Golan Heights without approval in a referendum.

71) The quote is from the YouTube of Kennedy's address to the nation on the Cuban Missile Crisis. The October 1962 Cuban Crisis, that brought the world on the brink of a nuclear war, was because of the principle of the right of a nation to live in peace within secure borders. President John Kennedy was prepared to prevent the build-up of a Russian nuclear strike capability on nearby Cuba, even if he had to confront the worst.

that roam there. The problem is that these people also regularly attack agricultural holdings, a plague that also affects other parts of Israel: Muslims set fire to crops, steal herds and mistreat or kill farmers, without the slightest intervention of the police and government forces. See YouTube movie: “Yoel Zilberman talks about the HaShomer HaHadash self defence unit”.

Remarkably, despite these self-evident truths, the majority of Jews outside of Israel agree to the ‘land for peace’ principle. However, its implementation will mean the end of the State of Israel... and of the Jews living there, because the land and people will then have fallen prey. The exiles have allowed themselves to be deceived by their own foremen. The traitors and misguided fools are not only in our own ranks, but also in Israel’s polity. See also: “The secular Zionist Agenda for a Jewish State” by Rabbi Chaim Simons.

Terrorism against Israel is permissible, says the Ambassador

An aspect of anti-liberal behavior is the tendency by many to pick and choose which sorts of terrorism are acceptable and which are unacceptable, in accordance with the ideological justifications the terrorists give for their actions. The most recent notable example of this behavior is found in an interview that Norwegian Ambassador Svein Sevje gave to the Ma’ariv daily newspaper on July 26 2011. Ma’ariv asked Sevje whether in the wake of Breivik’s terrorist attack Norwegians would be more sympathetic to the victimization of innocent Israelis by Palestinian terrorists. Anders Breivik burst onto the international screen when he carried out a monstrous act of terrorism against his fellow Norwegians. In all, that last Friday, Breivik murdered 77 people. Most of them were teenagers. To the question, Sevje said no, and he explained: “*We Norwegians view the occupation [of the Palestinian territories] as the reason for terror against Israel. Many Norwegians still see the occupation as the reason for attacks against Israel. Whoever thinks this way, will not change his mind as a result of the Oslo attack.*”

So in the mind of the liberal Norwegians, terrorism is justified if the ideology behind it is considered justified. For them it is unacceptable for Breivik to murder Norwegian children, because his ideology is wrong. But it is acceptable for Palestinians to murder Israeli children because their ideology is right.

Source: “Breivik and totalitarian democrats” by Caroline B. Glick - The Jerusalem Post # 28 July 2011. Theme: “There are those that seek to silence conservative thinkers by making a criminal connection between our writings and the acts of a terrorist.”

7.39 – The Westbank

The original 1922 League of Nations mandate made no distinction between what is now called Palestine and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The entire region was called Palestine and treated as a whole, at least in the eyes of the authors of Article 5: “*The Mandatory (Great Britain) shall be responsible for seeing that no Palestine territory shall be ceded or leased to, or in any way placed under the control of, the Government of any foreign Power.*” Three months later, in an effort to maintain control of the Suez Canal, England and France came to an agreement with the Hashemite family and King Fuad of newly independent Egypt and Sudan. In this agreement, the area east of the Jordan River called Transjordan and comprising 77% of the original mandate area, as well as the Golan Heights, was ceded. Emir Abdullah was given control of that area, which was only called Jordan much later. The thus closed partition has been accepted by the League of Nations as a hammer piece in apparent contradiction with Article 5, but in accordance with a hastily introduced Article 25 in which Great Britain could “*postpone or withhold*” those articles of the Mandate concerning a Jewish National Home. This

state of affairs was in flagrant contradiction with the customs of international law and was in fact breach of contract.

What is now called the West Bank lies west of the Jordan River and forms the heartland of Israel, encompassing Judea and Samaria. They pretend that this is inalienable Palestinian territory, but that makes no sense. In the nineteenth century it was mainly wasteland. These areas were occupied by the Jordanian army in the 1948 War of Independence (annexation was thwarted by the international community - only England allowed it) and the occupation continued until 1967, when, as a result of the Six Day War, it was reunited with the motherland Israel; then the military-strategic Golan Heights was also incorporated.⁷²⁾ Between 1948 and 1967, Jordan took little notice of the development of this region. Paragraph 6 of the Jordanian Constitution states: “Any person other than a Jew can become a Jordanian citizen and reside in the areas administered by Jordan.” Judea and Samaria, when Jordan occupied them, were therefore off limits to Jews. There was some Arab occupation at the time. It was also true that large parts were exclusively reserved for the military. See also YouTube: “The Legal Truth about the Westbank”.

Israeli borders to be based on 1967 lines?

In a speech on the Middle East on Thursday, May 19 2011, President Obama of the United States gave what was an unexpected stance on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, in stating that he believes the borders for the two countries should follow the border lines of 1967 in order to resolve the conflict.

President Obama concluded by saying that in order to reach a resolution that is just and fair, an agreement must respect the rights of both Israelis and Palestinians. In the end, he said, the choice must be between “*hate and hope; the shackles of the past, or the promise of the future.*”

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel reacted to Obama’s speech, rejecting his call for a reinstatement of the 1967 border lines. In a statement from the prime minister’s office, Netanyahu said that the ‘67 lines “*are both indefensible and (...) would leave major Israeli population centers in Judea and Samaria beyond those lines.*”



It is interesting to note how the claims of the so-called Liberation Organization evolved. The PLO was formed in 1964. There were no so-called ‘settlements’ then in the Westbank nor in Gaza. One should be aware of the fact that the original version of the PLO Covenant from 1964 stated in article 24: “*This Organization does not exercise any regional sovereignty over the West Bank in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, in the Gaza Strip or the Himmah area.*” Since the PLO’s original Covenant explicitly recog-

72) On May 15 1948, a day after the establishment of the State of Israel, the surrounding countries attacked Israel. In this war, Jordan occupied much of the area west of the Jordan, including Jerusalem. In view of the U.N. Resolution this annexation was illegal. The Six Day War followed in 1967, again between Israel and its surrounding neighbors. Israel then regained control of the 1948 territories, including Jerusalem and also the Sinai. After the Sinai was handed over to Egypt in 1979, Israel controlled almost exactly the area assigned in the Palestine Mandate for the portion west of the Jordan; one should know that the Golan Heights is not formally part of Israel.

nized Judea and Samaria, as well as Gaza and the eastern portion of Jerusalem, as belonging to Arab states, the only 'homeland' it sought to 'liberate' in 1964 was the State of Israel. However, the PLO revised its Covenant in 1968, a year after the Six-Day War, to remove the operative language of Article 24, thereby asserting for the first time a 'Palestinian claim of sovereignty' to both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. These were not part of the 'Palestinian Homeland' in 1964, for they were still under Jordanian rule, although not part of Jordan itself. When these areas came under Israeli rule, they suddenly took on a deceptive historical status!

What many do not know is that the large influx of settlers to the West Bank only took place between 1974 and 2000, after the Yom Kippur War. During this period, an estimated 400,000 Arabs moved here from Syria and Jordan, often on a tourist visa only. When it turned out that the social conditions and wages were better than in the home country, they decided to stay. The Jews returned after 1967, first to Hebron, where the Jewish community had been massacred in 1929, but also to the settlements of Gush Etzion, whose inhabitants had been murdered by the Arab Legion in 1948. It was only after 1973 that Jewish pioneers began to settle in the 'desolate regions' of Samaria, Benjamin, and the Jordan Valley, while the incoming Arabs moved elsewhere. So the international outrage at the Jewish settlements is unfounded, even immoral. In 2010, Judea and Samaria were home to approximately 1.3 million Muslim Arabs, 400,000 Jews and an estimated 60,000 Christians.

When the State of Israel was established, there was no border agreement. The truce limits at the end of the war of independence have never been recognized in the sense that Israel has never relinquished its territorial rights. The 1993 Oslo Accords divided Judea and Samaria into three areas. The Palestinians were then given the right to self-determination but that did not imply that they were also entitled to their own state. The only way such a state can come about is through negotiations with Israel since it regained control of the assigned territories in 1967, when it was attacked from all sides. Those should not be called 'occupied territories', for never have they been part of another state.

7.40 – The Refugee Problem

The Palestinian Authority's (PA) anti-Israel propaganda, which unfortunately has worldwide resonance, is based on a lie: Israel is said to have expelled hundreds of thousands of Arabs after the establishment of the new state, thus creating the refugee problem. Yet Mahmud Al-Habbash, a journalist for the official PA newspaper, Al-Hayat Al-Jadida, stated in an article on December 13, 2006 that the Arabs had voluntarily left their homes in 1948 at the behest of their own Arab leaders under the false promise of a speedy return.

At first, the Israelis did not expect the refugees to be a lasting problem in the more distant future. They assumed, and rightly so!, that the Arab countries with their vast territories would be willing to accommodate the majority who returned to their former homelands,⁷³⁾ and they felt that some sort of arrangement could be made for the remaining ones as part of a global approach. The treatment of the refugees in the decade following

73) Family names of many Palestinians, now attest to their non-Palestinian origins. Just as Jews bear names like Berliner, Warsaw and Toledano, phone books on the West Bank are filled with names like Elmisri (Egyptian), Chalabi (Syrian), Mugrabi (North Africa). Even the infamous George Habash bears a name with origins in Ethiopia. But names don't say everything. Yasser Arafat was an Egyptian. Faizal Hussein, Arafat's right-hand man, was from Iraq. The Arabs of the region initially did not want to accept them as their leaders, as they considered themselves more Jordanians than Palestinians, and of course these men were neither Jordanian nor Palestinian.

their displacement was best summed up by Ralph Galloway a former staff member of the UNRWA, the organization that administrates the refugee camps: “*The Arab States do not want to solve the refugee problem. They want to keep it as an open sore, as an affront to the United Nations and as a weapon against Israel. Arab leaders don’t give a damn whether the refugees live or die.*”⁷⁴⁾ With regard to the refugee problem, a new approach was thus chosen, for the first time in world history. In the aftermath of the war of independence, the refugee problem became a political weapon. The Arab League, which came up with this, found a willing ear among world leaders, and the Western press bleated eagerly.

Never before has there been the unsurmountable problem of refugees

This is a quote from the 1958 scientific work of Paul Ladame:

«« Throughout history we have seen nobles and vagabonds, peasants and proletarians, intellectuals and illiterates, Christians of every denomination as well as Jews, who fled and emigrated – they emigrated in order to better run off. We are talking about more than 65 million in three centuries [in the free world]. They have been the sap of the tree of Western civilization, the vital bodies of the blood circulation of the free world.

Nevertheless, and this is a decisive factor, if there have certainly been millions of refugees over the past centuries, there has never been the ‘problem’ of refugees. That problem is destined for our 20th century. That is for our generation. Why?

The first answer is that the migrants we have seen marching by, even if they were psychological refugees, did not pose a [lasting] problem. They were allowed to roam freely at their own risk in search of a host country. They either succeeded or died on the way. It was brutal, but it worked. No one could ever have imagined that one day it would be seen as human progress to house, feed, clothe, and care for them in camps – just enough not to die – without granting them the right to join the workforce and nurture the hope of citizenship.

(...) Finally, and this will be our final answer, the creation of the United Nations went hand in hand with the manifestation of this mass phenomenon. Countries that were of the opinion that they were saturated by the number of refugees, have turned to the United Nations and asked them to solve a problem for them that they should have solved on their own and without their intervention.

This brief analysis shows us why the refugee problem was meant for our age, for our generation. (...) This answer shows that the refugee problem (...) is essentially a political problem and not just a humanitarian one. »»

Source: “Le Rôle des Migrations dans le Monde Libre” (The role of immigrations in the free world) by Paul A. Ladame - Librairie E. Droz, Genève # 1958 (p. 236-37).

Although much is heard about the plight of the Palestinian refugees, little is said about the Jews who fled the Arab states. Their situation had long been precarious. During the 1947 UN debates, Arab leaders threatened them. For instance, Egypt’s delegate told the General Assembly at the time: “*The lives of one million Jews in Muslim countries would be jeopardised by partition.*” The number of Jews fleeing Arab countries for Israel in the years following Israel’s independence, after having lived there hundreds of years, is comparable to the number of Arabs leaving Palestine. Many Jews were allowed to take little more than the shirts they had on their backs. The Jewish World Organization of Arab Countries (WOJAC) estimates that the real estate left behind by Jews in Arab countries covers an area four times the State of Israel.

74) Ralph Galloway as quoted by Terence Prittie in a Sept. 1973 essay: “Middle East Refugees”, in a compilation of “The Palestinians: People, History, Politics” (p. 71).

7.41 – *Why do the Nations Plot?*

It remains odd why Israel is the special target of the world's scorn. One reason for wiping Israel off the map as a nation can be sought in the exceptional vitality, dynamism and intelligence of this people, which could eventually make it a too independent economic power, and that would threaten to disrupt the game of the world's oligarchic economic powers. The free world market does not exist where essential interests are at stake. Based on the geopolitical motive, Israel can therefore better forge alliances with the emerging economic powers in Asia and South America.



About Dawoud and his Family, a story to be told!

Comment on the photo above: Abou Dawoud is head of the family. He is now, in 2007, 75 years old. He has 11 children and 31 grandchildren. He originates from Al Saffoury- al Jalil, which he calls the occupied territories [occupied by Israel]. He and his family came to Lebanon in 1948 after the Nakba [catastrophe]. They settled in Naher al Bared. He told me that the refugees at that time [in the 1950s] lived in tents, and refused to build the camps with cement because they thought it would be the first step towards naturalisation in Lebanon. With the passing of the years the tents were worn out and the UNRWA gave them Zinco [steel plates], so that the refugees could start to build their own houses. In the 1980s, Naher al Bared succeeded in becoming an economic centre for the north of Lebanon with 41,000 refugees living there [inside the camp]. It succeeded in defying the 'embar-go' that the Lebanese authorities imposed on the rest of the camps [Palestinians are not allowed to own lands and homes and they are not allowed to work]. But that did not last long... In July 2007 the camp was demolished by the Lebanese army under the pretext of cleaning up terrorism [in order to get rid of Fateh al Islam]. The refugees were forced to leave the camp, leaving behind their homes, properties and memories. Abou Dawoud lost everything, everything he had worked for all his life. His house was destroyed and his furniture stolen. "Leaving the camp this time was harder than the previous time in 1948", he said.

Story: Farah Kobaissy, from Flickr under "Bedawi Palestinian Camp"
Caption: "Nulla dies sine linea" (no day without a story).

However, there is also the religious motive, which I refer to Ecclesiastes 4:12: "*A three-fold cord is not easily broken.*" It is remarkable that two cords does not produce a strong bond, not even four cords, but three cords make a very strong bond. When God began his plan for the world to deliver it from the clutches of the Evil One, He chose himself a people, starting with Abraham; God's own people which does not appear in the list of nations of Genesis 10, which enumerates all the nations of the earth. But a people without a land is like a man without a shadow. So God also chose a land and gave that land on lease to that people (Lev. 25:23), a people going to be called Israel, after Abraham's grandson. Of course, a people and a nation need a monarch, and that would culminate in the Davidic royal house from which Jesus Christ sprang, the monarch eagerly awaited for many generations, yet to be recognized by the Jews. The three cords in this context are therefore 'people, country and king'. The ruler of this age wants to oppose this essentially religious concept with all possible weaponry, incitement and liarity.

If one of those three cords were broken now, the whole cord would break and God's restoration plan would fail. That is the often unconscious motive that drives the nations to curse the Jews, who nowadays lead the twelve tribes of Israel (Abraham's grandson had twelve sons). Failure to assign the present Land of Israel to Judaism prevents God's people from coming to its messianic destiny. That would ultimately result in the coming messianic reign being thwarted, with the result that Lucifer trumps God. Anyone who says that he is not an anti-Semite being against the settlement of the Jewish people in the Land of Israel, but that this stems from concern for the Palestinians, is ignoring God's plan for the world and is thus de facto anti-Semite, however harsh that sounds; after all, it then appears that he is a warrior against God, and thereby he joins the camp of God's great adversary.

In fact, the Book of Truth says that the man's second major goal, who calls himself Pope Francis, is to destroy the Jews. See the messages of January 11, 2012 and July 21, 2013. The second one says through Christ: "*The two witnesses are the Christians and the House of Israel. Christianity is the first target, because it came from Me. Israel is the second target, because I was born a Jew and it is the land of the chosen people of God - home to Jerusalem.*" And also: "*Satan wants to destroy the Christians and the House of Israel, (...) by which he is making his greatest statement - that he is above God.*"

God's great plan must be seen in relation to Daniel's prophecy in the well-known second chapter where the stone, and the stone is Christ, fills the whole earth. Christ said to the chief priests, scribes, and elders, who asked him by what right He was acting (Mark 12:10): "*Have you not even read this Scripture: The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.*" The Temple is built on the foundation stone of the universe, Israeli tradition teaches. This stone is called the Eben-Stiya and it is this stone that will grow to fill the entire earth. Does this mean that Israel will own the whole earth, that they will own the ends of the earth? Of course not! As explained, their small country belongs to God, and eventually that will be the whole world, where the nations have, to date, been given near-total disposition to do whatever they want. However, if the people of Israel did what God did not like, they were sent away by Him, which explains the captivities. It is according to the Prophet Habakkuk (2:14) that in a future time "*the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord - as the waters cover the sea*". It says the knowledge of the 'glory' of the Lord, not the knowledge of the Lord. That insight fills me with great joy. And this is the meaning of Daniel's stone that in the famous vision fills the whole earth.

One last note. You may have noticed that I pay little attention to Arab politics. First, their consideration is quite simple: what was once an Islamic area, defined as a so-called 'waqf', has become an eternally inalienable heritage, will always remain so. What is now called Israel was before World War I part of the Islamic Commonwealth, a situation

that in the eyes of the Islamic Arabs needs to be restored - to the greater honour and glory of Allah. I also believe that without Western support the Arab countries would not have been able to make a fist. The center of gravity of the political aversion to Israel must be sought in the West, with us. The Dutch political leader and prominent figure, Geert Wilders, expressed it eloquently in his speech in Tel Aviv on December 5, 2010:

«« Because the conflict is ideological, territorial concessions are counterproductive. Ideologies cannot be defeated by concessions. They are encouraged and emboldened by it. Ideologies must be confronted with the iron will never to give in, “never, never, never, never – in nothing, great or small, large or petty”. That is the lesson which the world learned from Winston Churchill when he confronted the evil ideology of nazism. This conflict here in the Middle East is not about land and borders, but about Islamic Jihadism opposing Western liberty. From the moment that Israel was founded, the Arab leaders have rejected every partition plan and every initiative for a territorial settlement. The Islamic ideology simply does not accept the concept of a Jewish state. Neither Hamas nor Fatah are willing to recognize the right of the Jewish people to a state of their own in their historic homeland. No territorial concession on Israel’s part can ever change that. »»



APPENDIX 12

Historical Ignorance Underlying Opposition to Israel's Settlement Policy

Monday December 10, 2012

On December 4, 2012, the following was published (DPA/AFP/BELGA): *"Israel has announced additional construction plans following fierce international protests over its settlement policy in the Palestinian territories. At least 1,600 new housing units will also be built in Ramat Shlomo in northeast Jerusalem. The protests of the European countries against the years of Israeli colonization of areas where a Palestinian state would be established, will probably be central to the German-Israeli government talks in Berlin on Wednesday evening."*

The US also called on Israel to exercise restraint in its settlement policy. *"We disapprove of any unilateral decision"*, said White House spokesman Jay Carney in Washington. Such a statement only complicates efforts to resume direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians.

The Palestinians are now threatening to turn to the International Criminal Court in The Hague. "If Israel continues these war crimes in the form of colonization, we will be forced to go to the Criminal Court", the faithful newspaper Israel Hajom quotes Nabil Shaath, advisor to the Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas.

If you know the situation, you'll know that the following sentence is in all aspects

dead wrong: *"The protests of the European countries against the years of Israeli colonization of areas where a Palestinian state would be established, will probably be central to the German-Israeli government talks in Berlin on Wednes..."* Apparently the politicians and commentators do not feel hindered in their statements due to a lack of knowledge of the historical facts. That is why a brief overview follows.



The village Talmon in Samaria | Photo: Theo Horneman

Historically indefensible

The UN partition plan of November 1947, known as Resolution 181, deviated significantly from what was agreed in the mandate officially accepted by the League of Nations in 1922. Still, the Jewish leaders agreed. The horrific tragedy is that the partition

plan was rejected by the Muslim Palestinians and surrounding Arabs, thus totally canceling the proposal. The historical weight of that moment eluded them.

The mixed Jewish-Islamic state was not negotiable for them. However one may think of the Jewish presence in what is now called Israel and the rights of one population group against another, it is unjustifiable on historical grounds that the Jews would have taken the land from the Palestinians

The West Bank was occupied by the Jordanian army in the 1948 War of Independence, but was not annexed or incorporated, and that occupation continued until 1967, when it was reunited with the rest of Israel as a result of the Six Day War.

After Sinai was handed over to Egypt in 1979, Israel controlled almost exactly the same area assigned in the Palestine Mandate for the portion west of the Jordan River.

Never an independent nation west of the Jordan

What is now called the West Bank lies west of the Jordan River and forms the heartland of Israel, encompassing Judea and Samaria. This is pretended to be inalienable Palestinian territory, but this is historically incorrect. In the 19th century it was mainly wasteland.

In the 19th century and earlier, the land was allotted to the Vilayets (provinces) of Beirut and Damascus, and it was not until the Crimean War, in the mid-19th century, that a separate unit was created for Jerusalem that until then had belonged to the Damascus Vilayet. Arab spokespersons therefore argued at the 1947 UN hearings that Palestine west of the Jordan, which was then a mandate territory, never existed and was never allowed to come as an independent nation.

The large influx of Arab settlers took place between 1974 and 2000, after the Yom Kippur war. These Arabs were settlers, as they had no historical ties to the area, unlike the Jews. It was the economic motive that drove them to do so.

The first Jews returned after 1967, first to Hebron, where the Jewish community was massacred in 1929, but also to the settlement of Gush Etzion, whose inhabitants were murdered by the Arab Legion in 1948. It was only after 1973 that Jewish pioneers began to settle in the 'desolate regions' of Samaria, Benjamin, and the Jordan Valley, while the incoming Arabs moved elsewhere. The international outrage at the Jewish settlements is thus unfounded, even immoral.





Israelites being Strangers



The Israelite people deported after the fall of Lachish

Immigration has two aspects: the person who resides abroad and he who receives the foreigner. The people of Israel, and now the Jews (who are a sample of the greater people), have been constantly confronted with this throughout their long history. We will go over this in a nutshell because it covers a vast area. Alienhood implies assimilation: who will be the one to adapt? Are not all men strangers to God and are we not all called to assimilate, to become a member of his household? Isn't that also the deeper meaning of Daniel's dream of the little stone that ultimately fills the whole earth? In the Book of Daniel, there is a play on words with the concepts of 'stone' (e-ben), 'the Son' (ben), who in Daniel 7:13-14 receives an imperishable kingdom - which he finally will build (ben-ah). These concepts point to the Kingdom of God, which will be an earthly kingdom in which everyone will have become a household member of God. To be a stranger or not: that's the question!

8.42 – Abram became a Stranger

When God calls Abram to be a blessing to the whole world through his posterity, it goes along with the hard-to-bear command to leave his land and people and leave the Ur of the Chaldeans and “dwell” in the land of Canaan, which is now called Israel. Even after 55 years of Canaan, he was still not assimilated, still a guest, as evidenced by the pact of protection he signs with the Philistine Abimelech. (Gen. 21: 22-34) After sealing it, it says that Abraham “resided” in the land of the Philistines. In Hebrew, this type of abode is derived from the word for ‘foreigner’ or ‘stranger’, and indeed Abraham’s family was oppressed by the Philistines – not, however, by the Hittites. (Gen. 23: 6) This particular circumstance can be explained because Abraham did not settle in one place, but remained wandering. His more important wanderings were as follows: from Ur Kasidim to Haran,

from Haran to the Promised Land (Ha-Aretz), from Ha-Aretz to Haran (again), Haran to Alon Mora, Alon Mora to Beth El, Beth El to Egypt, Egypt to Bat El, Bat El to Hebron, pursued as far as Dan and Damascus, from Dan and Damascus back to Hebron, Hebron to Gerar, Gerar to Bersheva and from Bersheva back to Hebron. Abraham crossed borders and took residence in different countries. No wonder he remained an unassimilated stranger in the land given to him by God. And that is how it was meant to be, for this itinerant lifestyle would remain for his descendants the characteristic way of life, to remain so until the fullness of time shall have arrived. This being a stranger continued, according to the Biblical account, until the beginning of the Egyptian captivity, 160 years later. But there was no assimilation there either. Doesn't that apply as well to us Christians: we reside 'in' the world but are not allowed to be 'of' the world. (1 Pet. 2:11, Philip. 3:20)

Rabbi Chaim Navon of the Kehilat Shimshoni (Modi'in, Israel) aptly puts it in his article in the Dutch Christian magazine "Profetisch Perspectief" (Summer 2019): "*The Land of Israel is not the natural homeland of God's people but rather their mission and destination.*" He therefore begins his article as follows:

«« The first time that the region, [now called] Israel, is associated with what will be a nation that has sprung from Abraham, is when God says to him: "*Get out of your land, out of your family circle, and out of your father's house, into the land that I will show you.*" (Gen. 12:1) Eretz Yisrael is not presented here as Israel's homeland. On the contrary, Eretz Yisrael is shown here as the land for which one leaves his home and homeland, as the antitype of a homeland, as Abraham's 'exile', as a place whose name is not even mentioned. Eretz Yisrael is not the natural homeland of the Jewish people, but rather the land that God has given them to serve Him theree. »»

Rabbi Navon illustrates this with the story from Numbers 13 and 14, in which the spies, after returning from their exploration, speak of the impossibility of conquering the beautiful land, overflowing with milk and honey, from the awe-inspiring Canaanites. The people hearing this became totally disillusioned and then rebelled against God and Moses. This act of despair and lack of confidence kindled God's wrath, and He announced that their journey would last forty years and that none of the adults would see the Promised Land except his servant Caleb, a Judahite, who was the only one of the spies to issue a favorable report. Navon writes:

«« After hearing the punishment for their part in the spies' sin of faltering, they want to correct their mistake and enter the Promised Land on their own initiative and strength. But Moses warns: "*Do not go, for the Lord will not be among you. You will surely be defeated by your enemies.*" But the overconfident ignored the warning. They do not understand the true lesson of the sin of the spies, nor do they understand that if God commands you to 'not' go to the land, it is a sin to do so. The value of the land should not be absolute and lead to overconfidence [nationalism should not be rampant], for they are merely strangers and residents of the land – the land that belongs to God in a very special way among all the nations of the world. »»

On the individual plane the Promised Land represents a life of enormous promises despite opposition of all sorts. As Romans 4:5 says: "*No one earns God's righteousness. It can only be transferred when we no longer rely on our own works, but believe in the One who powerfully declares the ungodly to be righteous in His eyes. It is faith that transfers*

God's righteousness into our account." (Passion Translation) It is only then that we surmount the insecurities of life, become victorious and strong and accomplish things that would otherwise have been impossible. God's righteousness puts the impossible within the realm of the possible, with which we realize God's plan with our life.

8.43 – Several Kinds of Strangers

In a radio program during Christmas 1986, the well-known Israeli diplomat Pinchas Lapide († 1997), who played an important role in the Judeo-Christian dialogue in the Netherlands and Germany, formulated some striking thoughts about being a stranger: ⁷⁵⁾

«« Man is a barrel full of contradictions, a walking contradiction. He repels his fellow man, and at the same time attracts him. He is afraid of one and needs the other to find his own self. Between these poles of repulsion on the one hand and an almost magical attraction that the stranger exerts on him, on the other, moves the love for the stranger that is offered to us, and that curious xenophobia.

Froemede, the old Middle High German word, from which the word 'strange' is derived, means the other, who is far from me, the far-distant. The Romans called him 'hostis', whereby the stranger then almost automatically becomes an enemy [in English we speak of 'hostility', is enmity]. Hostis is the word that unites stranger and enemy. The [ancient] Greeks were even worse on this point: to them the stranger was the 'barbarian', which means nothing else than contemptuous ridicule and is a person who eventually becomes the target of outright hatred.

In the Bible, however, it is different. There the whole history of humankind begins with being a stranger, especially of its Creator, and then of its entire environment. "*Where are you, Adam?*" – with this question from God begins the history of humankind. And Adam, like any fugitive and stranger, crawls behind thickets to hide.

It is all and everything that makes a fellow human being different, the other. The language, the morals, the appearance, later also the religion. In other words: He is different from me, and then it is only a small psychological step to the consequence: He is very different, that is to say, he is the other, who I am not and do not want to be. Then, of course, the horizontal differences in language, religion and morals lead directly to vertical value judgments. I am good, and the one who is different is therefore worse. Of course, that being different is willed by God. No two people under the sun are alike, for each individual is the inimitable bearer of God's image.

Our task is to overcome alienation, to draw closer together. And the Talmud draws the conclusion: There are no strangers, there are only people who have not really met each other yet. That means any stranger is a potential friend, provided I have the courage to open up to him. Opening up in the most beautiful, psychological sense, to accept him in his God-willed otherness. Then he ceases to be a stranger

That is why Jewish tradition distinguishes three categories of foreigners. The first is neutral (ger), stands above the bustle, but lives in a Jewish environment

75) "Het bezit van de waarheid: het einde van de dialoog – Gedachten over wet en liefde in de Hebreeuwse Bijbel 'de vreemdeling in uw poorten' – Messiasverwachtingen bij Joden en Christenen" (Possession of the Truth: the End of the Dialogue - Thoughts of Law and Love in the Hebrew Bible 'The Stranger in your Gates' - Messianic Expectations among Jews and Christians) by Pinchas Lapide – Ten Have, Baarn, the Netherlands #1989 (pp. 46-51). Original title in German: "Können wir die Fremden lieben?" (Can we love our enemies?)

and observes Jewish laws. Then there is the stranger (Norri), who is present in a stimulating, stimulating, inspiring way. He is the creative stranger, whose appearance is a remedy for mental relaxation and who imparts new tension. The third is the hostile stranger (sar). He spreads fear, refuses to give up anything of himself, and comes only to take, not to receive. All three appear in the Bible, usually with the tacit challenge to ancient Israel to steal them and make them friends. »»»

Lapide then discusses Abraham, being a stranger, and the Jewish people as a whole, who were always strangers in a country that was foreign to them. Previously a punishment for sinful acts - think of Cain - it has now become Biblical pedagogy. He says: *“For this reason the Bible tells time and again: ‘The Lord our God (...) loves the stranger (...) and that’s why you should also love the stranger, for you yourself were once strangers in Egypt!’”* (Deut. 10:17-19)



8.44 – The Wanderers of the Exodus

At the end of the 240-year Egyptian exile in which God’s people are heavily yoked, a new episode begins in their existence, an existence of belonging to nothing but God. The exodus (departure) leads forty years in the desert, also symbolizing the ‘desert of the nations’ in which the Jewish people did not wander for forty years, but for two thousand years now. The Exodus begins at the Mountain of Revelation, where the people receive the Ten Commandments. Then the people move on. Kibroth Hattaävah indicates the first longer encampment, according to Numbers 33:16. This place is located right next to the Serabit el-Khadem mountain on the Gulf of Suez, where the miracle of the quail took place after the *“mixed multitude who were among them”* were lusting for meat, which is not surprising after such a grueling twelve-day exhausting trip (it does not say as sometimes translated: ‘the people in the middle of the caravan’). We should realize that this ragtag and bobtail did not consist of Israelites, which we see if we read Exodus 12:38

attentively. That there were strangers also appears from the account of the entrance in the Promised Land, because it is written: *“There was not a word of all that Moses had commanded, which Joshua did not read before all the assembly of Israel, as well as the women, the little ones ...and the strangers who were living among them.”* (Josh. 8:35) It follows that they were less willing to make sacrifices. After having arrived in Kibroth Hattaavah they loudly insist on meat. What a nerve! The Jewish Philo of Alexandria, a contemporary of Jesus, describes the mixed multitude in “De Vita Mosis” (1:147), and he tells that they went forth with the Israelites and consisted of a group of strangers who were among the true citizens; there were also those who were the offspring of a relation between a Hebrew father and an Egyptian wife and had been accepted as members of their father’s race; moreover there were those who admired the piety of these people and had therefore joined them; finally there were the people who walked over because they had come to the recognition of the right way, having witnessed the heaviness and multitude of the punishments that had hit their fellow countrymen.

8.45 – The Ten Lost Tribes of Israel

A very special exile, going to be highlighted, is the exile of the so-called lost ten tribes of Israel. Read ‘lost’ or ‘out of sight’ but not ‘irreversible disappearance’. One day they will be rediscovered. Moreover, it is a good thing that they have not yet been discovered, because that would have been reason for a new kind of replacement theory, such like: “Now that the ten tribes have been found, we no longer need those others, the Jews.”

The book of the prophet Hosea, who preached in the northern tribal section, deals especially with the kingdom of the ten. It is as if these sermons are more laced with vivid images. When Hosea condemns Israel’s idolatry, he speaks in powerful imagery. It is surprising when God orders Hosea to marry a harlot named Gomer. He must portray the prophetic image of Israel in his personal life. Israel of the ten tribes will disappear from the scene because of her treachery. In the same picture, Hosea has to send this Gomer away for adultery. At the transition to the seventh century before Christ, the ten tribes are enslaved and exiled by the Assyrian Empire. They will continue to exist elsewhere but they will not be known by their original name and they will have forgotten their identity. Gomer means to disappear or to disappear again.⁷⁶⁾ Yet the main promises of God’s covenant with his people still remained in effect. They may have forgotten but God does not forget. Careful study shows that God gave conditional and unconditional promises to Abraham and the nation of Israel. The banishment of the lost tribes was under one of the conditional promises or threats and their return will be under one of the unconditional promises.

Hosea portrays the lost tribes as placed in a woman in travail, as a wanderer in Hades, Hell. There they roam, that is, in the sphere of Hell, and are sensitive to what is going on

76) My dictionary says that Gomer’s descendants are known as the Cimmeria, Khumry or Kimbers, but that is incorrect. Khumry is one of the names given to the ten in their disappearance. Khumry, pronounced with a guttural ‘kh’, may have been derived from Omri (Ha-Umry), founder of the Omrid dynasty. King Omri († 894 BC), the sixth king of Israel of the ten or northern tribes, founded Samaria, which later became the political center of that part of Israel. After the ten were given the name Khumry, at a later stage the name Gomer might have been derived from it and not the other way around, as suggested by the ancient historian Flavius Josephus. The name Gomer also appears in the list of nations of Genesis 10 and 11, but that is a different Gomer.

there. Astray from God, they are now under the rule of idols, one important being the trident-wielding Poseidon. There in the land of “*eretz Acharetz*” (land of Arsereth) ⁷⁷⁾ the ten tribes will dwell and be found. Acher indicates a going back or falling back, a falling away from God, and that implies a transition to the enemy’s camp. And its base, as we know, is Hades (another word for Hell).

The graphic novel of idolatry fits in with the idea that their wanderings can be understood from the language appropriate to primitive gnos̄is. We learn that they adhered to Egyptian idolatry, for it is said that their birth blood stuck to them. Of course, their birth - as a people - took place in Egypt. (Hos. 13: 4, 12: 13-14, 7:11) It is evident that Satan is the director of the disappearance. Too much has already been sacrificed on his altar. The disappearance means that they will be seen as pagans and they have. It’s called: “*From now on they will eat unclean [not kosher].*” “*They are ‘going’ to live among the Gentiles*” is in the sense of disappearing (in Hebrew *ndad*). Hosea predicts that they will go to Assyria. In this verse, ‘going’ is a translation of ‘*halak*’, which indicates a continuous disappearance and implies that there will be an extraordinarily long disappearance, which obviously means estranged, alienated from one’s own people and alienated from God.

The Neo-Assyrian Empire practiced in the conquered territories a policy of deportations of population groups. What we are now seeing in Europe, with the enormous influx of immigrants, follows the same principle, but dressed differently. The majority of these relocations were carefully planned by the Assyrian victors in order to strengthen their empire. It could serve to spread agricultural techniques or develop new lands. It was also done as an alternative to execution. Bustenay Oded estimates that about 3.5 to 5.3 million people were moved around over a 250-year period.⁷⁸⁾ It was a very effective way to quench the cultural identity of the conquered peoples and to suppress them. We should take into account that there were no books and proper means of communication to keep a culture alive. According to the beliefs of the time, the gods were local. If you left your locality it meant that you left your gods and his powers. This meant of course that you had to worship other gods once arrived in a foreign land. That meant also a change in identity. Because the ten tribes had given themselves already to idolatry, this reasoning fully applies to them.



77) The ‘*eretz Arsereth*’ explanation refers to the non-canonical revelation of Ezra III and IV, writings that are little known today because they do not appear in modern editions of the Bible. The older editions of the Vulgate, after the 12th century, usually added them. In the well-known Geneva Bible of 1560, with notes of Calvinist signature, they are known as the apocryphal 2 Esdras.

78) “Mass deportations and deportees in the Neo-Assyrian empire” by Bustenay Oded - Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag, Wiesbaden # 1979.

The Promise of Land in Biblical Perspective



The Roman Empire during the Bar Kochba Revolt

What is the relevance of God's land promise to Abraham? Is it still relevant? The Christian consensus assumes that the land promise has been canceled since Christ's coming. Christ had to come into a land and come out of a people, the Jewish. After He had done his work of redemption, the land promise is a thing of the past. The Jews have been wanderers ever since and are a living testimony to what happened then. The founding of the State of Israel in 1948 is a curiosity, they say, an anachronism, in fact an absurdity. Unfortunately, they say, their return has been accompanied by persecution of the original inhabitants. From the oppressed they have become oppressors. And as for the end times, that their return would be a sign of, well that's bullshit. The world is rushing to its final verdict, yes, but that is hidden somewhere in an indeterminate and distant future. That is separate from the establishment of the State of Israel. And it continues, whether that state will continue to exist is questionable. This problem will be dealt with here.

9.46 – The Depopulation of Judeah

The land promise has remained a hot issue throughout history. After crushing the Jewish Bar Kokhba Revolt (132-136 AD), the Roman Emperor Hadrian decided to call Judeah Palestine. That name refers to the Philistine people who once lived there. This naming was one of the ways to destroy any kind of Jewish nationalism for good, he thought. That the Philistines as a people had long ceased to exist and could no longer be found in the then existing range of peoples, must have been a positive note for Hadrian, for if the Philistines had still existed this could have given rise to a new kind of nationalism, and the Romans were not waiting for that. Jerusalem was rebuilt by him according to pagan premisses. Emperor 'Aelius' Hadrianus renamed it after himself, and thus the city was referred to in all documents as the Aelia Capitolina, a name that should banish any thought of a Biblical origin. Already two years earlier he wanted to give that name, and that insolent act sparked the revolt against the Roman rule.

The Romans had emerged from the Bar Kokhba Revolt badly and were looking for a way to prevent a recurrence. If a people did not have their own land, they would no longer be able to continue to exist as a people, was the idea, and so the Romans would be released from this burden. The depopulation of Judeah was due to the military confrontations and the devastating hunger and diseases raging. After that terrible war, Judeah had become a nation without a people. Under normal circumstances, that should have been the final straw for the survival of God's people. The Jews in the dispersal were then not seen as a major threat. But against all logic, the people survived throughout the ages. The Jew became the eternal migrant, a stranger on earth, the seeker in search of God, while the longing was kept alive with the prayer: *"Back in Jerusalem next year!"*



The Roman Emperor Hadrian (117-138 AD)

9.47 – The Palestinian-Jewish Conflict

The situation has now arisen that the land is again covered by its original inhabitants and the agricultural lands have been made fertile. But international politics wants to deny the Jews the right to the land and reside in it under the guise of violating the rights of 'the original inhabitants'.

Some historical facts in relation to the origin of the problem are revealing. Non-Jewish immigrants had come in the second part of the 19th century and first part of the 20th from all quarters in the Middle East, including Turkey, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Transjordan, Saudi Arabia, the Yemens, Egypt, Sudan, and Libya. Joan Peters in her ground breaking book of 1984: "From Time Immemorial", asserts that *"...if all those Jews and all those Arabs who arrived in (...) Palestine between 1893 and 1948 had remained, and if they were forced to leave now, a dual exodus of at least equal proportion would in all probability take place. Palestine would be depopulated once again."*

What took hundreds of thousands of Arabs to Palestine? Economic opportunity! The Zionists brought the skills and necessary resources. They initiated economic activities that created jobs and wealth on a level far beyond that of the indigenous peoples. In response, large groups of Arabs moved toward the settlers to find a living. They found there a higher standard of living, greater freedoms, superior education and better health

care than their compatriots could get in the Arab Muslim countries. Family names of many Palestinians, now attest to their non-Palestinian origins. Just as Jews bear names like Berliner, Warsaw and Toledano, phone books on the West Bank – which is actually in the heart-land of Israel, are filled with names like Elmisri (Egyptian), Chalabi (Syrian), Mugrabi (North Africa). Even the infamous George Habash – the founder and former Secretary General of the “Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine” – bears a name with origins in Ethiopia, which is ‘Habash’ in both Arabic and Hebrew. The conclusion is clear. There are Arab-Islamic Israelis as well as Arab-Jewish Israelis, from Yemen for instance. If, knowing this, one uses the term Palestinian as justification for terrorism against the State of Israel en its citizens, then I strongly disagree, unrelated to any historic-Biblical point of view. Justification should be based on facts and moral!

I am not making a plea to deny the Palestinians the right to live in that country. That was never the intention of successive Israeli kabinets. If we distance ourselves from Biblical arguments, both groups have an equal right to live in that country. A society is the appropriate solution for this kind of thing, not a two-state solution where the Palestinians make life so difficult for the Israelites by using the independent enclaves as attack bases. Once that happens, who will care about spilled Jewish blood? Selective indignation is a great evil and always plays a part in Jew hatred. This hatred has a strongly irrational element as the strange phenomenon occurs that many anti-Semites are disbelievers, even atheists. The last thing they worry about is God’s plan for the world and yet they are fiercely anti-Jewish.

9.48 – Why Jews are Hated?

A Jewish woman once asked me at Schiphol Airport where we had arrived from Israel, almost desperately: “*Why are we so hated?*” I didn’t have an answer at the time. I could have said, “First of all, they hate you because they hate God; you are God’s instrument for the salvation of the world. That is the reason and it is beyond common sense.” The God inimical man is naturally prone to hate God’s people. And the Christian man? He would like to see himself in the center of God’s interest. Don’t forget the jealousy, greed and lust for power! No human emotion is alien to the Christian; so why would they put the Jews in the forefront.

There is another factor that comes into play. The Bible is about God’s plan of restoration of the world. What preceded that effort of restoration and what will happen next is hardly mentioned. The Bible deals with the seventh ‘day of the making’, the *olam assia* says the Talmud. After God made the world in six days, He rested from the work of creation out of ‘nothing’.⁷⁹⁾ Then, on the seventh day, a different kind of making started. God entrusted this making to Man, knowing that it could only be fully accomplished through the ‘man’ Jesus. This special making, through the ages, was a difficult task, so that man would receive strength and assistance and absolutely needed it, but then he had to ask God for it. God may have rested from his creative work on the seventh day, a day that is still not over, but his involvement with us has never ceased to exist. The shepherd of Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps. (Ps. 121) If God stopped being with us for just one single moment, everything would instantly disappear. Now, all the Bible, from the first word to the last, is about that seventh day. Before that seventh day comes to an end, there

79) In fact, God creates from Himself, and God is not nothing. God is spirit and spirit is invisible. The visible hangs on the unseen, but modern science does not want to know about that. Our science is based on the Cartesian rule: “*Clare distincte et percepere*” (only *apercieve* what can be seen with the eye). Denying God is simple in this system: one has only to establish that something is imperceptible to determine that it does not exist, assuming that this system is the way to determine ‘everything’, while also having its limitations.

will be a new earth and new heaven - the Millennial Reign of Peace - that will no longer be subject to the inclination towards evil, neither in ourselves nor outside. The old earth will come to an end by tribulations, but that does not herald the end of the world, but it will be the end of this present world to make way for something so beautiful that it is beyond our imagination. In that going down, anyone who calls on the Name of the Lord and asks for forgiveness shall be saved. (Rom. 10:13) This is true even of those who have sold their souls to Satan. That is how far the mercy of God reaches: "Oh Lord, that my soul may be saved by You!" will be the ringing call.

Anyone who does not understand this will not be able to understand that the divine judgment that then strikes is not the last judgment, an important one but not the very last. And he will be full of fear for that end, will not want to hear of it, will also be full of misunderstanding of the land promise intended for Abraham's offspring. The Prophet Daniel had a vision of a stone with a tiny beginning that would finally fill the whole earth (Dan. 2:32-35), a vision that I believe refers to the land promise. It starts with a small piece of land. The land of Israel is just a pebble, no more than a pinhead, and starting from that place the whole earth is going to be filled with God's Glory. God not only wants to save Man but also the Earth (Wis. 11: 21-26), and on that new earth the born-again Man is assigned a place, which is now a weary earth, tormented by exploitation, pollution and poison. This interpretation of Daniel's vision does not mean that the people of Israel will possess the entire earth. Why? The land of Israel belongs to God. (Lev. 25:23) It is God's testing ground transferred in stewardship to the people of Israel. In the same way, God will also transfer the rest of the earth, once it has become his special possession, in stewardship to the crowds of people then living.

9.49 – Conclusion

From the foregoing it appears that the spiritualization of the Bible, in which only a heavenly realm counts and not a future earthly realm, has been decisive in not understanding the place of the Jewish people in God's plan for the world. After the Jews brought forth Christ, they had become a relic from the Christian perspective of later centuries, a museum piece, which may be interesting to look at, but nothing more. Replacement theology may see 'us' instead of 'them', but that does not mean that this theology has appropriated the earthly promises to the Jews, it could not be because there was no theological explanation for that.

Therefore, Bible-believing Christians should not tire of emphasizing that the land promise to the people of Israel is vital in God's restoration plan for the world. God doesn't just want our salvation. We are literally allowed to eat fatty and marl-rich foods in the midst of deliciously smelling fields. Therefore, the return of the ancient people to God's soil, witnessed by our generation, heralds 'the coming kingdom', as the Jews commonly call it; we speak of the Millennial Reign of Peace. Only after Christ has returned in exactly the same way as He left, will that reign begin, only after his feet have touched the Mount of Olives. Then let the trumpets blow and the cymbals ring. Then let the polyphonic choir start a new song, one that will be sung forever and ever.



Prospect of the Coming Kingdom



Tamarisk

God's promises to Israel have very ancient papers. Among all the other nations, Israel was chosen as a kingdom of priests, in a destiny that has remained unabated. Only after the Jewish people will have recognized their Messiah, will this reach its full potential. The land where they now live has already become an oasis. The deserts have begun to bloom, foreshadowing the messianic kingdom, being the "Your kingdom" of the Lord's Prayer.

10.50 – The Jews, the Chosen People

Israel is not like all other nations. When God delivered the nation of Israel from Egyptian bondage, they became subject to God, who had stolen them from the hand of Pharaoh, their former owner. She thus became God's special property among all nations. Deuteronomy 5:15 reads: *"And remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out from there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm. Therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day."* Because God rested from his work on the 7th day according to Genesis 2:2, Israel was allowed to rest every 7th once it had become God's slave or collaborator, which from that moment on - immediately after being removed from Pharaoh's regime - constituted the basis for keeping the Sabbath rest, although the principle of rest, but not necessarily every seven days, must have been known previously, conclusion based on the fact that the Sabbath-rest is part of the natural law, formulated in the Ten Commandments, which has always been written within everyone's heart as from birth. The novelty is that it was formulated as a 'seventh' day rest and as such was made compulsory for the Israeli people. However, because it is part of the natural law, the Sabbath-rest also applies to all non-Israelites.

Many, including in Israel, refuse to recognize the special place and function of God's people, saying: "Israel may be chosen by God, but that doesn't mean she has been singled out." (In French: *choisi* versus *élu*.) And further: "The Talmudic conception of being chosen to be a people of God's own possession has caused many disasters." - as if it were not Biblical! The need to be equal to others and vice versa to make other people equal to them has always existed. (1 Sam 8:20) This is also a decisive factor in the Israeli politics of today. That is why it is thought well to offer land for peace, and that for a

most unstable and windy peace! Offering land to the Palestinian brothers, who are in a precarious and dangerous situation, is not wisdom. Besides, the struggle is not about living space or partial self-government. It is a cultural confrontation with strong religious undertones. Both parties dispute the inheritance given by God. It is even forbidden to give up land, because according to Leviticus 25:23 it remains God's property: "*The land shall not be sold permanently, for the land is Mine; for you are strangers and sojourners with Me.*" So God's initial transfer – "*it be to you as an everlasting possession*" (Gen. 17:8) – was only a partial transfer of ownership, known as lease-land or stewardship.

It is the old point of contention between Isaac and Ishmael, where both think in the same terms. The Muslims are used to say: "Once won for Allah always remains Islamic territory."⁸⁰⁾ In such a territory there is no room for non-Muslims, never, unless under very painful and humiliating conditions. "Palestine (Israel) must be freed of thorns and thistles - that's the Jews - so that we (the Muslims) can be a proud people again!" Genesis 21:10 says: "*Sara said to Abraham: Cast out this bondwoman and her son Ismael; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, namely with Isaac.*" The case has focused. There is no longer question of co-heir; in today's world it's all or nothing.

Nevertheless, the undersigned votes in favor of a two-state solution. It already exists. The area east of the Jordan River is the real Palestine, making up 77% of the original British Mandate. That is known as Jordan. The boundaries of this were determined in 1922 by the League of Nations. And what today is called the West Bank is a misleading term and constitutes Israel's heartland, encompassing Judea and Samaria with the Dead Sea to the east. These areas were occupied by the Jordanian army in the 1948 War of Independence and remained so until 1967, when they were reunited with the rest of Israel as a result of the Six Day War. Between 1948 and 1967, Jordan did little or nothing about its economic and agricultural development. There were some Arab living there at the time. Moreover, large parts were only accessible to military personnel. What many do not know is that the large influx of settlers only took place between 1974 and 2000.

The fact that I once again dare to emphasize the theme of the Jews as the chosen people, will be viewed by many with a shaking head as a sign of a dubious form of arterio-sclerosis. I am at retirement age. That will be the reason! I am getting old. Then may I tell you a secret? Fifty years ago I thought the same way. The real reason is that I take the Bible seriously and am not ignorant of certain historical facts. History is important, precisely to prevent the repetition of histories. Professor Paul Eidelberg, a political figure, wrote in his newsletter of 27th October 2009, under the heading "The end of an era and the promise of a new" :

«« Israel's rebirth in 1948 provides the national foundation for the universal recognition of the Torah (Bible) as the paradigm of how man should live. Even now we behold a renaissance in Jewish philosophy as well as a convergence of science and Torah that surpasses the works of the great Jewish philosophers of previous ages. It is in this light that we are to understand why the nations are trying to truncate and destroy Israel. Subliminally, they know and fear that their modes of thought and ways of life have no intrinsic validity. Despite Israel's bungled Western political system, and despite the death and destruction inflicted upon her by the successors of the Nazis, Israel has risen from ashes and dust to

80) Because Spain once belonged to the Moors, in Muslim circles Spain is talked about in the same way as Israel. In their eyes, because of their occupation of the country at the time, it became an inalienable region that must be reclaimed for Allah.

become the virtual capital of the world in scientific technology, which - mark my words - is but the surface and prelude of a spiritual renaissance. »»

10.51 – I have Created You unto My Glory

The question arises as to what exactly being chosen means. Jeshurun is derived from the word Israel, and means ‘the most righteous’, is in fact a pet name, for in the Septuagint it is translated ‘agapemenos’, ‘the beloved one’. In Isaiah 44:2-4 is written: *“Thus says the Lord who made you and formed you from the womb, who will help you: Fear not, O Jacob my servant; and you, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen. For I will pour water on thirsty earth and make brooks on the dry ground. I will pour my Spirit on your descendants, and my blessing on your offspring; they will spring up like the green tamarisk, like willows by the watercourses.”* And in verse 8: *“You are my witnesses.”* The preceding chapter announces the return of the people to the Promised Land, prophecy that came to fruition in the last century. God says: *“I will gather them (...) whom I have created unto my Glory.”* (Is. 43:5-7) To which we may add: ...that his Glory may shine upon all his children. After all, the Book of Truth says: *“Life is given by God, for a reason. It is to give Glory to God and to encourage his children to unite with Him, finally, when life will change.”* (14-6-2013) That is to say, when our transfiguration takes place that gives us back our Adamic condition, precondition of the Reign of Peace. Otherwise, peace would remain a lofty thought forever.

Glory is sometimes translated as majesty and is a common Biblical term. Jesus uses that in the well known high priestly prayer, addressed to the heavenly Father: *“I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.”* (John 17:4) And it appears in Simeon’s hymn: *“My eyes have seen your salvation, which You have prepared before the face of all peoples: a light to bring revelation to the Gentiles and glory to your people Israel.”* (Luke 2:30-32) From this we may conclude, a vision that fits the Jewish way of seeing, that being witness, the seeing of God, refers to the revelation of God’s Glory. To be fellow witness is better, because the creation itself already bears witness to God’s Glory. (Ps. 19:1-7, Isa. 6:3) Not only that: God’s Word bears witness to it! (Ps. 19:8-12) To be witness means to proclaim and teach (torah) according to the psalmist’s word: *“May the words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart be pleasing.”* (Ps. 19:14)

What should we imagine in the revelation of God’s glory, mention of which is also given in the Letter to the Romans: *“The glory which shall be revealed in us.”* (Rom. 8:18), what is specifically intended for a particular group of Christians, those from the Gentiles (non-Jews), because that is what Romans is about. In seeing God one becomes equal to God; that is the premise. (2 Cor. 3:18) Indeed, God is Love, God is of a perfect morality, He is justice and possesses eternal life. These attributes are more or less within the human confines. The other, those of sovereignty (no obligation to render account), omniscience, omnipresence, omnipotence and immutability (in God’s nature and Attributes), those are rather contradictions to the human potential, though they have come nearer in Christ. It is in the first four Attributes that the Jewish people may be a witness, to which a fifth Attribute has been added, that of the Merciful Father. (cf. message to JNSR of 24-10-2009) In the Godman Jesus Christ that has become the Attribute of infinite Mercy, unhindered by divine justice. No single Attribute can contradict one another, because the balance of the whole universe depends on it. By means of the Bible and by exemplifying the glory of God’s creation, the Jewish people will show the world the ways of the Lord and how to walk them, and they will set an example. (Gen. 17:1)

This will allow this dislocated earth to once again become a model of harmony, peace and justice. Then the power of money, the unjust Mammon, will be dethroned, to make way for the divine polder model (a Dutch term to denote consensus-based policy making), heralding the restoration of the hierarchy of kings: the administrative unity of king, priest and prophet – however frenzied and improbable this may seem. Then the derailment and godlessness of the current scientific system and political and social structure will be exposed. Surely our time will forever be a topic of conversation and a terrifying example of how it failed, for the Age of Enlightenment has brought the opposite of what it told us. Never before has the Earth been immersed in such an eclipse of God and never before have there been so many righteous who implore God’s mercy! (Rev. 8:3) ⁸¹⁾

10.52 – The Coming of the Jewish People to its ‘messianic destiny’

The interlude of the Church from the Gentiles (non-Jews) is almost over. The Jewish people will take over the relay staff. They will be the leading nation under the blessed destination that the world is heading towards. What about ‘those singled out’ referred to by Paul in his late epistles, addressed to the Gentiles? Their election is meant (predestined) for a smaller group who together in Christ are made Highpriest after the order of Melchizedek. (Hebr. 5-7) In our dispensation we should distinguish between the church as head and the church of the larger community - that is the body - of all who accept their predestination unto grace in order to become, according to the first letter of Peter (2:9), a royal priesthood. This is so because priests and faithful partake in different ways and organically in the one priesthood of Jesus Christ. This line of reasoning follows the drift of Vatican Council II. According to Romans 9, the people who do not accept this calling are known as the children of the flesh; those who do, as the children of promise. See also Valtorta’s impressive treatise on this chapter. In her discussion she points out that:

«« Those who want to be Christians, and truly so, should hold the same affection for their separated brothers as Paul held for the Jews, his separated brothers [to the flesh]. Elected sons, each of a kind. The ones who believe in Christ [and work in Christ] but [yet] are no part of the mystic Body, because they are not [directly] linked to the mystic Grape tree that is the Church of Rome. The others are those who are part of the Church of Rome, but are dead members. They have received baptism and other sacraments of the true Church, but since then have fallen in the practice of deadly sins or sinful habits because of [the workings of] evil will, or [on the other hand] they were struck with Ecclesiastical condemnations [officially or by the nature of things, that is *latae sententiae*], having succumbed to all kinds of heresies: superstition, idolatry even with regard to man, community with the devil, membership of anti-Christian sects, spiritism, magic and various other alienations. »» (Lesson 38)

The church of the anointed priests is a smaller group, since the group of priests is always smaller than the people. To them (the head) has been given the service of reconciliation to the benefit of the people, which includes both the children of the promise and the children of the flesh. This means that the reconciliation is destined for Israel and all the

81) In 1952 Martin Buber published “Eclipse of God: Studies in the Relation Between Religion and Philosophy.” Of course this had everything to do with the German war trauma, and the author admitted that the “Eclipse of God is the characteristic of the world-hour we are living.” (“Martin Buber Werke”, Lambert-Schneider - Vol. I, p. 520) The eclipse of God has not diminished since then. Buber told he was unable to conceive of divine Revelation as ever ceasing; but that for us humans it appears as a time of divine absence. (Buber Biography by Maurice S. Friedman, under *Gottesfinsternis*).

Christians baptized having forsaken their calling, sometimes very seriously indeed. It is important to realize that during the Holy Mass the priest does not represent Christ, but that Christ works through him. As a result, the Mass remains the one and only sacrifice that was once. Therefore, the Holy Mass is truly a sacrifice and truly reconciliatory. The priestly church in Christ, who is known to be a descendent from David of the tribe of Judah, is the replacement of the Levitical high priestly caste. The church of the general community, which of course differs from the priestly church, is the addition of a new scion to the people of Israel (the 12 tribes), which Paul refers to in the Letter to the Romans when he speaks about the inoculated branches on the noble olive. In its high priestly function, the Christian Church partakes 'in' Christ in one of the tribes of Israel. If there is any question about a doctrine of replacement, then it applies to the service of reconciliation where one tribe of Israel (Judah) has taken to itself the task of the other (Levi). For the rest it seems to be that, as long as the Israel of the 12 tribes is not grafted back in the noble olive tree, the Christian Church exists in stead of Israel. It is in the manner of the second in line who replaces the prime minister when temporarily incapacitated because, says the Apostle, the mystery of God reveals that the Israelites remain the beloved according to the election. For, he continues, the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. Why then this mystery is revealed to us? So that we, the Christian Church, would not brag and scoff. (Rom. 11:18-29)

In this connection I am reminded of what Reverend A.A. Leenhouts told, already in 1971:⁸²⁾ *"The [great] ecumenical movement is totally opposite God's plan with Israel, because of a false structure of synthesis as well as the wish for unity that is completely divorced from our pagan-Christian assignment for the re-establishment of Israel as a Kingdom of Priests. It will be one flock and one Pastor - inclusive Israel."* The minister focussed of course the present Israel that consists mainly of the tribe of Judah. The following is discussed in the accompanying script for the Shofar Series:⁸³⁾

«« In order for the Jewish people to be able to fulfill their divinely appointed messianic office, Israel's holy status among the nations will have to resemble the status of Levi among the other tribes. Levi, now, was destined to do the temple service. So the Jewish people, from whom the Messiah sprang, will have to be set free for this ministry [but not again animal sacrifices]. »»

Christ is priest after the order of Melchizedek. Coming from a different tribe than the Levitical priestly caste, namely of Judah, a change of office has thus taken place, which is explained in Hebrews ch. 7. It follows that the State of Israel is predestined among the other nations to fulfill the temple service with its related benefits. It should be noted that this service and its emoluments can only come into their own after the Jewish people have recognized their Messiah, whom we call Jesus, so formulated because, after all, Jesus has a different meaning for Israel than for the others. I eagerly await that great moment when an encore will bring peace to the region, joyful herald of the kingdom to come. Leenhouts' explanation of the analogy of the holy status to be given to Israel, in accordance with the former function of the tribe of Levi, is as follows:⁸⁴⁾

«« Just as the tribe of Levi in the Old Testament was exempted in order to fulfill its priestly service, so all the Jewish people [as a kingdom of priests] will have to be exempted to serve the nations of the world as a kind of ombudsman. This is the

82) "Mijn Wraak is Barmhartig" (My Vengeance is Sweet) by Dr. A. A. Leenhouts – Stichting Getuigenis en Eenheid, Amsterdam # 1971 (p. 29).

83) The Shofar Series in English at www.getuigeniseneenheid.nl (Primo Vere Uitg.)

priestly service that the Jewish people – which does not mean the political State of Israel – will fulfill in future. All this hears to Exodus 19:6, where God grants the nation of Israel that official status of ‘kingdom of priests’. They are released in order to perform their official duties. (...) To function only as a STATE in the midst of the nations means as much as ‘being equal with the nations around’. (1 Sam. 8:20) But functioning as a Kingdom of Priests postulates being holy, being set apart for the service of God, as the tribe of Levi was set apart from the other tribes. (...) A political solution can only be born of a religious solution. This is the forgotten dimension in all diplomatic proposals for peace for the Middle East and for world peace in general. Therefore, any political design that ignores Israel’s election is a request to the Eternal to come with that ban that Malachi spoke of through the Holy Spirit. (Mal. 4: 6) Meanwhile, the heavens remain of brass, and not a drop of ‘shalom’ falls on a thirsty earth. »»

I also quote Piet de Vries, a pastor of the Restored Dutch Reformed Church: ⁸⁵⁾

«« The New Testament shows that the death and resurrection of Christ constitute the turning point of salvation history [in God’s dealings with his people]. The emergence of the New Testament congregation, which is Jewish by its roots – although Gentiles are given a place within it – is connected with that action. The New Testament nowhere gives rise to the idea that God has changed tack. The New Testament Church is not an interlude that is foreign to the continuing line of revelation from the old to the new dispensation [oikonomia], but has a fixed and unshakable place there, until the Lord’s people from both the old and the new dispensation will enter the New Jerusalem. (...) The Christian church, which arose as a movement within Judaism with a hitherto unprecedented position for Pagans within Judaism, developed into a movement alongside Judaism. Many Christians lost sight of the special position of the Jewish people. (...) Together with the Old Testament Saints, the New Testament Saints expect the New Jerusalem to come down from Heaven. All unfulfilled prophecies from the old and new dispensations will then be perfectly fulfilled, spiritually as well as materially. Then everything material will be spiritual, and the spiritual also material. »»

10.53 – In the land of the shadow of death, upon them shall shine the light

Considering the judgments that will strike the earth, a distinction has to be made between the different end times, of which it is unclear which judgment belongs to which end time. The purpose of this Scriptural vagueness is to keep us alert, so that we are constantly waiting for the coming of the Lord and remain zealous for the cause. (1 Thess. 5:1-11) The basic themes repeat themselves in the Bible as in a mirror maze and it is only the intensity of the images that separates one age from another. End times are transition times. Our end time is determined by the sign of the Lord appearing in heaven, the Cross of Golgotha. (Mt. 24:30) Then the Kingdom of Peace will be installed with one religion all over the world. That era will have an end time again, after the thousand years, prelude for the restoration of the paradisiacal state. After all, it is written in Revelation 10: 9: “So the Apostle John went to the angel and said to him: Give me the little book. And he answered: Take and eat it, and it will make your stomach bitter, but it will be as sweet as honey in your mouth.” The sweetness of this book has been compared to the coming Reign of Peace and the bitterness to the subsequent apostasy, perhaps because the new-

84) Open letter of Apr. 4 1969 of A.A. Leenhouts to the government and people of Israel.

85) See “Profetisch Perspectief”, winter 2008, nr. 57 (p. 37).

borns are jealous of the immortality of the old guard, and then finally after thousand years they want to settle the score. But we don't have to worry about that. Now there is joy in what is to come; the rhymed psalm 68, translated from Dutch, goes as follows:

<i>God is the source, the crystal well,</i>	<i>Even the land of darkness and gloom</i>
<i>the fountain for all of Israel;</i>	<i>will know what thine splendor is;</i>
<i>Only blessing flows from Him.</i>	<i>Egypt will honour God.</i>
<i>His praise springs like a fountain;</i>	<i>The morning land hastily stretches</i>
<i>His people will be full of joy,</i>	<i>out its hands unto Thee, like a bride.</i>
<i>advancing from all sides.</i>	<i>Thou will reign there too.</i>
<i>God, our strong ally, show us</i>	<i>The world pays tribute to God,</i>
<i>thine might, thine powers great!</i>	<i>for all the world is thine Kingdom,</i>
<i>Thou will remember thine City.</i>	<i>and Jerusalem in its midst;</i>
<i>Princes from afar offer Him</i>	<i>From far away the Kings come,</i>
<i>for Jerusalem's sake</i>	<i>with tribute standing before You.</i>
<i>their reverence, their gifts.</i>	<i>Yeah, each nation will pray to Yahweh.</i>

From now on we can look forward to different stages. The next is marked by a great revival movement in Israel, already somewhat visible, but preceded by the enlightenment of the inner conscience, as predicted in Garabandal in the early 1960s. Israel will then become the shining example according to the word of the Prophet: *"The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them shall shine the light. (...) Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David. (...) The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this."* (Is. 9:2-7) Israel will then be an oasis in the world, also economically, if we are to believe the already quoted Paul Eidelberg. And with Israel perhaps some Jewish-loving nations too, that people may come to their senses and cry out: "The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is also our God. Come save us Lord. Come Lord Jesus, come!" The Prophet Zechariah fits in here: *"Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the LORD. Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you."* (Zech. 8:22-23)



10.54 – Bible-believing Christians and Israel come closer together

The most important development outside of Israel, I believe, will be the misguided ecumenism, a counter-Pentecost, totally disconnected from Judaism. False Messianism is like a curse, in which the falsely evoked expectations sooner or later turn into devastating forces. They are also compelling forces, because everything is permitted in the name of unity. That is the characteristic of the self-exalting human being. Which religion can withstand this? The Roman Catholic Church, seeing her base of power fading, will not be able to provide a sufficient counterbalance and will ultimately be the guiding force in this erroneously directed progressive movement. Based on what followed the Vatican II Council, you don't have to be a prophet to predict that (this was written in 2010). There are parallels between the secularization within the Christian churches now and that of

Judaism in Roman times, when a changing of the guard took place. Paradoxically, that secularization is conducive to the Jesus-centric revival movement in Israel, for in these circumstances they need not follow the example of the established church institutions.

Remarkably, there are signs of recognition between Judaism and the Evangelicals, who are also present within the established churches, but have no recognized status there. The Jewish people have a growing appreciation for the Evangelicals, also called Christian Zionists. The vice president of the World Jewish Congress, Isi Leibner, wrote in the Jerusalem Post of August 17, 2009, in “Evangelicals: an Appreciation”:

«« At a time when much of global public opinion views Israel through the distorted lenses of Arab and anti-Semitic defamation, millions of Evangelicals have emerged as our most devoted supporters. (...) The evolution of this relationship is extraordinary and defies logic. It is only over the past three decades that support for Israel assumed such a high priority among this Christian denomination, which is rapidly expanding at a time when other churches are in dramatic decline. (...) Evangelical support for Israel is not matched by other Christian denominations. Many Protestant churches have in fact transformed their antipathy toward Israel into hatred. The Catholic Church made enormous progress identifying the evil of anti-Semitism, but due to a combination of realpolitik and an unwillingness to swallow the bitter theological pill of recognizing Jewish statehood, it is still far from evenhanded in relation to the Arab-Israel conflict. (...) The principal reason for Evangelical support is that unlike other Christian groups, they reject replacement theology. (...) The alliance with the Evangelicals represents one of the few bright lights in an otherwise dismal political environment. Indeed, were there more Evangelicals in Protestant/Catholic Europe, the prevailing hostility against Israel in that region might yet be substantially modified. As an observant Jew, I appreciate their support and hope that they will be blessed for their friendship. »»

The Chief Rabbi of Efrat, Shlomo Riskin, commented similarly in an article “Opening the ‘Present’ Together” :

«« The God of Creation ‘worked’ [as it were] alone; in contrast, the God of history is dependent on Israel. Redemption is also dependent to a certain extent on the other nations and their actions. (...) Since 1965, major members of the [Christian] churches [certainly not all, but nevertheless including popes] have asked forgiveness of the Jews for the anti-Semitism, persecutions and pogroms which the European churches had fostered; they have also rejected the doctrine of successionism or Replacement Theology, realizing that “*God does not repent of his covenants; his covenant with Israel is eternal.*” And especially in the case of the Evangelicals, who were never part of the European churches’ anti-Semitism, churchmen have become staunch supporters of Jewish rights to Israel, helping us morally, politically and financially. This new attitude could not have come at a more opportune time. »»

One thing is certain: we live in exciting times with many unexpected curves and vistas. All the world is a stage. Keep your eyes open and stay faithful in prayer!



Greater Israel

From the Nile to the Euphrates?



With contributions by Neline Schipper – 24 Nov. 2020

Where should the borders of the State of Israel be? What is it entitled to or does it believe it is entitled to? A hot topic. Just as the Palestinians are 100 percent convinced that the Jews will destroy the Al Aqsa Mosque on the Temple Mount as soon as they get the chance (and then build their own temple there), so are the political leaders in the Middle East convinced that the Jews want to push the boundaries until Israel encompasses all of Greater Israel. The Israeli politicians can shout out loud that that is nonsense, but the Arabs do not believe that.

11.55 – God’s Land

About four thousand years ago, the Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, promised the territory of the State of Israel to Patriarch Abraham and his descendants as an “*everlasting possession*”, even under oath. Through his sons Isaac and Jacob, this land promise continues until the present time. Abraham had other sons, such as his eldest son, Ishmael, from whom the Arabs descend. They call themselves Adnanites, after Ishmael’s grandson. Arabs include those who call themselves Palestinian. The Arabs today own a much larger tract of land than the Jews plus an enormous amount of oil and other riches, but the patch of land called Israel is begrudged.

This presentation underlines how Biblically God positions Himself time and again about his connectedness with the ‘land’, in fact God’s land. The rest of the world belongs to the nations, but this stretch of land belongs exclusively to God. From there his plan of redemption is set in motion. God’s kingdom begins as a small stone but, according to Daniel’s prophecy, it will become a mountain that fills the entire earth. (Dan. 2:32-35)

Several Bible texts show the extent of the Promised Land, of which Judeah and Samaria are the core. Although not all prophecies are identical, in all cases the area is much larger

than present-day Israel. What do these promises of God have to say nowadays? Two extreme positions on this subject are being examined in more detail.

11.56 – Like a Leitmotif through the Bible

- Genesis 12:7 : “*Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said: To your descendants I will give this land.*” This was the promise of land, not yet specified.

- Genesis 15:18 : “*On the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying: To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates.*” This promise is more specific: “*from the river of Egypt to the Euphrates.*” From the river of Egypt supposedly indicates the Wadi El-Arish that lies on the Mediterranean Sea in the strip of land between Gaza and Egypt, but it is also often seen as the Nile.

- Genesis 17:8 : “*All the land of Canaan I give (...) as an everlasting possession.*” Again a repetition of the promise of land: “*all of Canaan*”. And “*everlasting*”, a term for which the Hebrew *olam* is used to mean ‘forever, everlasting, never ending, eternity’. This term is also used for the existence of God “from and to eternity”.

- Genesis 26:4 : “*I will give (...) all these lands.*” This is a promise to Isaac while he was in Gerar (south-central Israel). Egypt is not covered by this promise, but the land of the Philistines is.

- Genesis 28:4 : In this prophecy, Isaac blesses his son Jacob with the land that God gave to Abraham.

- Genesis 28:13 : In this prophecy God promises to Jacob in Bethel “*the land on which you are sleeping*”.

- Genesis 35:12 : Back at Bethel, God promises Jacob and his descendants the land He gave to Abraham and Isaac.

- Genesis 50:24 : In this prophecy, Joseph tells his brothers in Egypt that God will bring them to the land that was promised to the fathers under oath.

- Exodus 3:8 : In God’s commission to Moses, the promise comes again to bring them back to a beautiful and vast land, the land of the Canaanites.

- Exodus 23:31 : “*And I will set your bounds from the Red Sea [Gulf of Aqaba] to the [Mediterranean] Sea, where the Philistines live, and from the desert to the River [Euphrates].*” A different way of saying of Genesis 15:18.

- Deuteronomy 1:7 : “*Break up the camp and take your journey, and go to the mountains of the Amorites, to all the neighboring places in the plain [of the Jordan], in the mountains and in the lowland, in the Negev and on the seacoast – to the land of the Canaanites – and to Lebanon, as far as the great river, the River Euphrates.*” **If you take these regions together it encompasses the so-called Greater Israel: from the Wadi El-Arish to the Euphrates.**

- Deuteronomy 11:24 : “*Every place on which the sole of your foot treads shall be yours: from the wilderness until the Lebanon, and from the River Euphrates, even to the Western Sea, shall be your territory.*” **The area again includes Greater Israel.**

- Joshua 1:4 : “*From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the River Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and to the Great Sea toward the west, shall be your territory.*” A slightly different way of indicating the size of the country (see also Deuteronomy 34:1-3).

- Ezekiel 47 and 48 : Here we find the description of the size of the land after the final restoration of Israel at the time of the coming Reign of Peace, with the region of

each tribe being listed separately. It is not possible to define the exact boundaries, but the area broadly includes the land between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan plus part of the Negev, and in the north the Golan, all of Lebanon and part of Syria.

11.57 – Solution 1 : The Kairos Document

These Biblical texts show that God is inseparably bound to the territory of the present State of Israel. The fact that He promises his people a country to live in, invites reflection. The return of the Jewish people in our days was not a historically logical development, but clearly shows that it was an act of God. Besides, that return is still incomplete. What does that mean at present? There are very different opinions about this.

Let's take a closer look at the Kairos Document. Palestinian Christians of Catholic, Anglican and Lutheran backgrounds issued the controversial Kairos Document in 2009, which states that the Palestinians have a right:

«« ...to their land [now called Israel], which is God's land, as is the case with all countries in the world. It is holy inasmuch as God is present in it, for God alone is holy and is the sanctifier. (...) It is God's land and therefore it must be a land of reconciliation, peace and love. (...) *"The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it."* (Ps. 24:1) (...) We declare that any theology, seemingly based on the Bible or on faith or on history, that legitimizes the occupation [of their land by the Jewish people], is far from Christian teachings. »»

Here a false position is proclaimed in sweet terms. The whole earth might be God's, but God has handed that earth over to humankind to make use of it as they wish. He gave them in that transfer a great deal of autonomy to do with the land whatever they see fit and to define the societal structure according their own views, even if that goes against God's laws, also when benefiting becomes exploitation. (Gen. 3:23; 9:1-5; 11:9) This is different with the land for his people Israel. The territory of Israel is God's land. God does not submit it to human arbitrariness, especially in this regard. God may do whatever He wants with it because it is his own land according to Leviticus 25:23: *"The land [that I have given you in property] must not be sold permanently, because the land is Mine and you [people of Israel] reside in my land as foreigners and strangers."* – according to Romans 9:4, *"the adoption to sonship"* depends on the good favour of the foster father, i.e. God. Because God disposes, God will expel his people when it defiles 'His' land. *"The Lord will scatter you among the peoples"* was the threat. (See for instance Deut. 4:27.) Indeed, the country was completely destroyed and depopulated by the Romans. Yes, it became *"the wasteland of my people, a land overgrown with thorns and briars."* (Is. 32:13) For millennia, the land was neglected. Only when the Jews returned did the country flourish again! A salient detail is that when the Jews stayed in Russia they were desperately bad farmers despite the tsars' efforts to make them farmers through donations of beautiful farmland. But once in Israel they reclaimed the fallow land and they turned out to be top cultivators and farmers.

11.58 – Solution 2 : The Oded Yinon Plan

There is a strong political movement in Israel that is backing the infamous Oded Yinon Plan. It is even rumored that supporters of this plan have a place in Prime Minister Netanyahu's government.

What is the Oded Yinon Plan? The plan is named after a Jewish scholar who wrote an essay about it in 1982: *"A Strategy for Israel in the 1980's"*. The Greater Israel that is advocated in the Oded Yinon Plan extends a straight demarcation line (west-southwest) from the estuary of the Euphrates to the Red Sea, a huge area! The Greater Israel idea

envisions the creation of a number of allied states around Israel. These states include Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, Sinai as well as parts of Iraq and Saudi Arabia. The plan emphasizes that Israel must model its geopolitical environment through the Balkanization (i.e., the disintegration of multicultural states into small nation states) of the surrounding Arab states. The division then depends on the ethnic or sectarian composition of each territory. Iraq can be cited as an example. This country could fall apart into a state for the Kurds, one for the Sunnis, and one for the Shia. To survive, Israel would have to become an imperial regional power. The satellite states surrounding Israel should be subordinate and form the basis for a pax-Israelium. The fragmentation of all Arab states into smaller units has been a recurring theme in Zionist strategic thinking; it is not new.

Some followers of the Oded Yinon Plan do not see the plan outlined above as merely an ideal, but they read it as if already in reality. To cite the example of Iraq again; the Iran-Iraq war of 1988 would fit into that plan. Lines are also drawn with the Lebanon War in 2006 and the ongoing wars in Syria and the wider Middle East.

People come to your senses! Don't you understand that attempts to implement this plan puts the fuse in the powder keg? As if we didn't have enough trouble already! Wanting to fulfil a prophecy on your own initiative can only lead to misery. One thing is for sure: 'Not now!'

11.59 – Conclusion

The Kairos Document wants to completely disconnect the God of Israel and the people of Israel from the land of Israel. The Oded Yinon Plan, on the other hand, wants to bring the outer borders of the Promised Land under Israeli hegemony now. Some theologians claim that the territory of the Promised Land is uncertain, that it is different every time, or that the territory that God promised Moses is not that size.

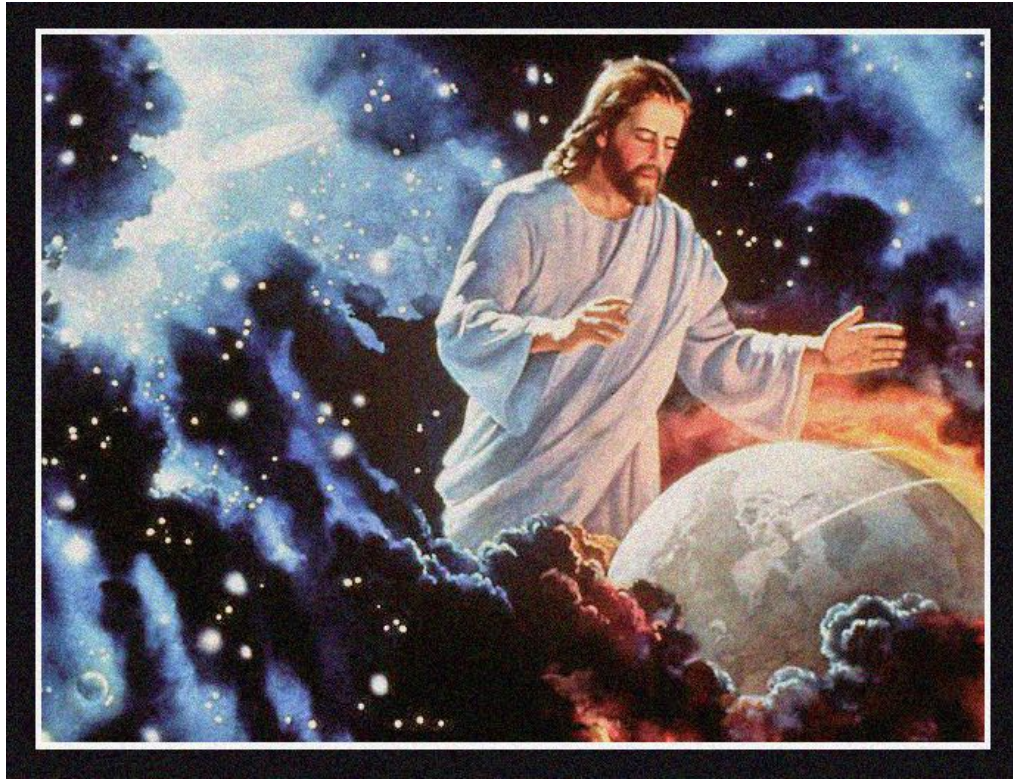
Unfortunately, all these views are the result of inaccurate and, above all, biased reading. The only correct conclusion that can be drawn from the cited Bible verses is that God has promised Israel the land from the Wadi El-Arish to the Euphrates, and from the Mediterranean to the Amorite region beyond Jordan (kingdoms of Sihon and Og). That does not mean that Israel already has the right to annex all these areas. Greater Israel is still the Promised Land! When during the Reign of Peace the Messiah intervenes, then and only then, according to Ezekiel 47 and 48, God will hand over this area to Israel. Not before!

It will then have become a completely different world in all respects, incomparable to the current political and social structure. In this sense, Jesus said to Pilate: "*My kingdom is not of this world.*" To which we can add: but indeed of the 'world to come' – as the Jews customarily call the Reign of Peace.

See also: "Greater Israel: The Zionist Plan for the Middle East - The Infamous Oded Yinon Plan", Introduction by Michel Chossudovsky, 23rd april 2016.

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‘On our Way to a New Earth’



THE WORLD OF THE MAKING

We are still in the Olam Ha-Assia

The end of the Bible, called judgment day, is not necessarily the end of the world. It is just the closing chapter of an important episode and end of the world as is known today. It is undoubtedly this existential fear that the world will end, which drives many to reject a literal interpretation of the Reign of Peace. A radio priest in the Netherlands even dared to call believing in this a sin against the Holy Spirit, an unpardonable sin. He cursed me to Hell. What's wrong with those priests? They must bless !!

12.60 – Our Judaic Heritage

The Christian church is a continuation of the Synagogue. It is cause of concern that with such an important question as the end-time prophecies whole theories are dished up without reference to our Judaic heritage. As if no eschatological expectations existed in Israel! Brad Young confides in the first chapter of his book “Paul the Jewish Theologian”: “As Christians, we have accepted Paul’s teachings about Jesus while rejecting his love of the Hebrew Bible as well as his Judaic heritage.” An unfortunate approach, for we may safely state that there is nothing in his teachings that does not fit with his authentic Judaism. Paul’s unconscious witness to the predominance of Jewish culture in the Church is also well pointed out by Professor Brandon in “The Fall of Jerusalem and the Christian Church”. He explains:

«« Although Paul is so vividly conscious of his role of Apostle to the Uncircumcision and although his Letters are clearly addressed to communities which are predominantly Gentile, he uses with an apparently unthinking familiarity concepts and examples which are thoroughly Jewish. In striking contrast to the later Gospel writers, he seeks to instruct, or exhort, or to demonstrate a point to his readers, by some quotation from the Old Testament, employed in a thoroughly rabbinical manner, without any kind of explanation. (...) Whatever may have been the antecedents of the Gentile Christians before their conversion, whether they had been proselytes or Godfearers or completely heathen, their entrance into the Christian Church brought them at once within the ambit of Jewish theology. They were introduced by their preceptors to a well-established and impressive corpus of belief and practice, which demanded their reverence and respect. »» (p. 21-22)

In Brandon's view it was the fall of Jerusalem that marked the turning point away from a typical Judaic-Christian interpretation of Scripture, which deviation - in my view - became decisive with the repudiation of Origen some 150 years later. Origen (ca. 185 - 253/254) was a great connoisseur of the Jewish world of thought, but made the mistake of wanting to explain too much. For the rest, he has been an extremely valuable apologist (defender of the faith) and his writings are still worth reading.

12.61 – The World of the Making

Central to Jewish thinking, about our world heading towards its end times, is the view of the Olam Assia. We are now in the 'world of the making', not just a making, but a creative making. A certain Rabbi Bemporad concludes in his analysis of the dialogue of Job with his friends:

«« The world is unfinished and man must strive to elevate himself for he is not yet its centre [as it was meant to be]. It is only in an unfinished universe, one that is in the making, one that is not yet won for God and man, that man can indeed have a task and a function. Yet the good suffer and the best suffer most, because it is the just and true and righteous that take upon themselves the task of bringing justice and truth in the world. (...) The friends deny the very nature of man's task.

For them man has no self-transcending, nature transforming historical task. They thus deny what is at the heart of the prophetic concept of man, that he is the instrument for the realization of the messianic goal. They make trivial the suffering and agony, the tragic pathos endured by the just man who is the agent for the realization of the good. The friends want God to do man's work and thus they have not spoken correctly as Job who recognizes injustice, yet sticks to his tasks and to his ideal despite the utmost agony and the most intense suffering. Job is the servant of God par excellence, and he symbolizes to us the historic transformations that nature and man must accomplish if God's world is to emerge, to be brought into being. »»

This is very nicely formulated. If man is considered an active agent of change, a partner in the process of creation, this proceeds from an independent decision by God. (Is. 43:7-10) In this sense we may hold that God needs man for the realization of the messianic goal, a goal that evolves in the 'world of the making' or 'olam assia'. It could also be said that God really wants to involve man. He wants to involve us, humans, in his plan of salvation, even though He could carry it out without us. Having said this, we should take care not to succumb to wilful pride, which is very dangerous because it denies man's need for God's help. Pride of any kind is deadly for the realization of the messianic goal.

This is recognized in the Aleinu prayer, thrice a day, at the closing of the Jewish prayer service, entreating God's help to perfect the world. I only partially agree with Rabbi Bemporad when he says that *"only in an unfinished universe man can have a task and a function"*. It is conceivable that in a 'finished' universe - on the eighth day perhaps? - man functions as a kind of custodian, an assertion, it seems to me, the rabbi doesn't wish to contradict. It would be more accurate to state that "in an unfinished universe man's existence can only be explained if he indeed has a task and a function". Otherwise, the purpose of life would only be derived from a selfish self-centeredness. The inward quest for peace and perfection would then become his sole purpose of being, as is the case in the New Age movement.

12.62 – A New Dispensation

What is the Biblical foundation of this reasoning? This is to be found in Genesis 2:2-3. According to a current interpretation of the original text, the third verse ends with: (in the 6 days before) "God created in order to make" (in the 7th still going on). The verse can be presented as follows: *"By the seventh day, God completed his work (malachah) which He had done, and He abstained on the seventh day from all his work (malachah) which He had done. God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it because on it He abstained from his work (malachah) which God created to make."* The last words are puzzling. Did God create to create? (asher-bara Elohim la'asot) Who has to do that creating? Indeed, it is 'our' purpose in this world to complete the creation that God almighty accomplished. We are God's partners in the work of creation! The Almighty intentionally did not create a perfected universe, which means that, according to the teleological principle, the creation is heading towards a predetermined and very distant goal. He did create a perfect but not perfected universe, to prevent idleness. Otherwise, the world would not be 'perfect' any more.

Actually, the collection of Bible scrolls is about the 7th day or 'world of the making (against)', called in Jewish parlance 'the Olam Assia', after which there will be another day, the 8th or 50th day (7x7 plus 1). The weekly mega-cycle still runs its first course. There are three intervening cycles: the weekly or lunar cycle plus the annual cycle, which is solar, and there is also the harvest cycle. Each infringement of God's creative act whereby his creative work is cursed, assaulted, and destroyed, is a violation of the sanctification of the seventh day. At judgment day its sanctification will be complete. Then, our space of time will have been consummated, in Greek 'sunteleia tou Ayonos', and from then on a new era will take hold (ayon is the same as the Hebrew olam and both mean space of time, period, era, age, or world). This Greek expression is used five times in the Gospel of Matthew (Mt. 13:39, 40, 49; 24:3; 28:20) and once more in Hebrews 9:26. The last mention is interesting, because there the consummation is accomplished at the Crucifixion, hinge point of all times. Certainly this was not the end of our physical world, but the beginning of a new dispensation. Therefore, the 7th day Sabbath is a reminder of the world to come under a new dispensation, when God's people will lie down in green pastures beside the waters of rest / menuhot (Ps. 23:1), which again does not equal idleness. There will be things to do, even in that day, but on a different plane.

12.63 – Humanity has 'not yet' Entered its Rest

One interpretation is that the story of creation is told for the sake of the Sabbath ideal. It tells us in symbolic language that when the creation of the world was completed with the

calling into life of the highest beings - of Adam and Adamah - the Creator from that moment on celebrated his own sabbath, for millennia onwards. Then began the human workday of history in the making. As noted: *"Job, God's servant par excellence, symbolizes the historic transformations that man must accomplish if God's world is to emerge, to be brought into being."* I like to point out that the Sabbath ordinance at Horeb was totally new then and without parallels, neither in Israel nor its surrounding cultures of the time, and should therefore be regarded as a precious gift from God to humankind, a foretaste of greater things, He who made this institution not for his own sake but for ours. (Mk 2:27) Aryeh Kaplan said in his small and widely read booklet on the Sabbath: ⁸⁶⁾

«« Judaism contains many ritual laws, rules that strengthen man's relationship with G-d. These include the holidays, the Kashrus laws [purity laws], and such things as [the ornaments of] Tallis, Tefillin and the Mezuzah. It is, in large part, these rituals that separate Judaism from all other ethical systems. Among the many rituals of Judaism, we find one prime ritual that stands above the rest. That is Shabbos - the Jewish Sabbath. (...) Think about it for a moment. Of all the many rituals of Judaism, only one is mentioned in the Ten Commandments. (...) As long as Judaism exists as a vibrant, vital force, the Sabbath is its most outstanding ritual practice. »»

Menuha is rest, the leading principle of Sabbath, which is an intrinsically positive requirement denoting gladness, peace and perfection, in short holiness. Its fruition is in the world to come, *"for humankind has not yet entered its rest and ceased from its works as God did from his; if in the promised land the people of Israel had already been given rest, then God would not afterward have spoken of another day."* (Hebr. 4:8-10) This world to come with its rest is not to be found in the heavenly spheres but here on earth. As God rested on the 7th so Israel was allowed to rest each 7th day once it had become God's 'slave' in the labor of perfecting this world. Once God freed Israel from its bondage in Egypt, they became bonded to God (Deut. 5:15) who had stolen them from the hand of pharaoh, their previous owner, which explains why the legal requirement for the Sabbath dates from that period, though its theological basis goes back much earlier, in a so-called prolepsis, ⁸⁷⁾ for Genesis 2:2 mentions: *"and God ended his work of creation and rested on the 7th day"*. However, the work of creation itself did not end then: it was transferred from God to Man and sealed through a covenant on Mount Horeb.

Yet it is not that God rested from 'all' his works. He rested from the work (malacha) that involved 'creative' action. And it is also in this way that man ought to respect the seventh day. But God by no means rested from his works of mercy, reconciliation, sanctification, and justice, nor did He stop his work for maintaining the accomplished work of creation. A chair is a work of human creation; God's creative work resulted in the universe and all life. Without his supportive Love in affinity and agreement it could not continue to exist, not even for a split second. Only when humankind has entered its day of rest, allegorically the 8th day, they will at last have understood the meaning of the works of mercy and be able to continue to exist in them together with God, who is truly a father.

86) "SABBATH - Day of Eternity" by Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan - National Conference of Synagogue Youth and the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations # 1984 (ch. 1).

87) Prolepsis is the representation of something in the future as if it already existed or had happened. An example of this is that Adam's wife is called 'Eve', because she is the mother of all living, while her first child did not exist then.

The conclusion about the kind of work that God continues to do on his sabbathical rest, fits with the Midrash Genesis Rabbah 11:5 and 10, here quoted from the translation of Rabbi H. Freedman and Maurice Simon (1939):

«« Then he went back to Rabbi Akiba and said to him: If it is as you say that the Holy One, blessed be He, honours the Sabbath, then He should not stir up winds or cause the rain to fall on that day. (...) R. Phinehas said in R. Oshaya's name: Although you read: BECAUSE THAT IN IT HE RESTED FROM ALL HIS WORK WHICH GOD CREATED TO MAKE, He rested from the work of [creating] His world, but not from the work of the wicked and the work of the righteous, for He works with the former and with the latter. »»

12.64 – The Creating Against

The perfecting of the world is no neutral affair. It goes along with much struggle against them who do not want the Kingdom of God on earth; who are not satisfied with a mere custodianship and try to appropriate the titles that belong to the owner, our Lord and Master. The symbolic representation of this blasphemous practice is Esau, the hairy and sturdy bloke who thirsts for action, the bragger. How closely this name resembles Asa! Therefore, God says in Malachi 1:2 : “*Jacob I loved, but Esau I have hated.*” to be rendered as “How I hate this making!” This hating is the same word that is translated elsewhere with unloved, like in Genesis 29:31 (NKJ): “*When the Lord saw that Leah was unloved, He opened her womb.*” The King James version says hated. Verily, God cannot hate. Each soul lost is as precious in the eyes of God as all the others together!, so the saying goes.

The collection of Bible scrolls known to us deals with the creating and making (asa/esau) of the mystery cults who work to stop the perfecting of the world, which I call the ‘creating-against’, tolerated until the gates of the Reign of Peace are unlocked. Only in this light may we truly understand its message. The Bible recounts the vicissitudes of the children of the light, heirs to Adam and Eve. So, the end of the Bible, called judgment day, is not necessarily the end of the world. It is just the closing chapter of an important episode and the end of the world as known today. ‘World’ may be understood as a moral entity or as a composition of matter. The meaning of the second letter of Peter 3:10-12 is then placed in a very different light:

«« The day of the Lord will come in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. (...) Whilst the saints are eagerly looking for and hastening the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat. »»

This approach tallies with Revelation 2:

«« I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. I saw the New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven. The tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people. And all tears had been wept away. »»

And thus the first world will perish but the second remains, waiting to be adorned in the inner room as a more beautiful bride as ever: And then, in the early morning of the eighth day, the K’bod Hashem (the Glory of God) shines forth ...and a flame comes forth from his fiery countenance and consumes the sacrifice of praise in the beauty of our holiness.

There He comes! He comes with intent to take up permanent abode in the Beit ha-Mikdash (Temple): in the purified sanctity of our souls. There He comes, quenching our thirst like the dew on tender shoots!

One should not be surprised as if, here, we propose a completely new theology, for already Origen (185-252/254),⁸⁸⁾ the greatest teacher of Christian doctrine of his time, looked forward to a fiery ordeal, through which men should pass in the world to come. Every one already baptised with water and Spirit should, he thought, if he needed cleansing, be baptised by the Lord Jesus in a river of fire, and so purified enter paradise. In this sense also he looked forward to a (spiritual) conflagration of the world, by which all beings in need of such discipline should be 'at once' chastised and healed. No doubt he had undergone this purification by fire from own experience.⁸⁹⁾ How else could he have spoken about this? In that sense, he was looking forward to a (spiritual) world fire, whereby all souls in need of such a correction would be 'immediately' chastised and healed, and whether immediately for everyone remains to be seen. From the height of Tabor to the height of Golgotha! And from Golgotha to the heights of Pentecost!



88) In the writings known to us, Origen makes no mention of the doctrine of Christ's return, which aspect at the time was prominent in most of the schemes of the Christian belief. He treats Christ's coming in glory as the spiritual revelation of his true nature, though he says that he by no means rejects "the second presence of the Son of God more simply understood".

89) The theological term for this purification fire is transverberation. This term comes from the Latin 'transverberare' and means to pierce or to penetrate into. In mystical literature it is also known as 'ferita', an Italian word meaning 'wound' or 'heartbreak'. It is often referred to as the seraphic attack because it is usually accompanied by a vision of an angel inflicting the wound - a love wound that ignites the soul with love for God. At the same time it is a purification which causes suffering, otherwise the soul could not be raised to that special state of union with God. There is the world-famous marble statue of Gian Lorenzo Bernini in the Cornaro Chapel in Rome where Saint Therese of Avila undergoes the transverberation. The transverberation reveals our own sinfulness seen with God's eyes, so that even our daily supposedly insignificant sins lead to great heartbreak and an overwhelming sense of great deficiency, under which important saints such as Padre Pio suffered greatly throughout their lives.

The Jewish Festive Calender of Redeeming Grace!



Mandelbrot fractal

God's programming of the ages is called dispensationalism, a term based on the English translation of the Greek 'oikonomia', which indicates distinct stages. In the story of the unjust steward, that same word is usually translated with stewardship. Oikonomia is derived from 'oikos' (house) plus the verb 'nemein' (to distribute, manage).⁹⁰⁾ Oikonomia is the economy of grace, to be understood as the organization and allocation of God's means of grace and the time-bound manner of God's action. Each person has received a portion of grace for the position in which God likes to see him, of which God says: "My grace is sufficient for you." (2 Cor. 12:9) That too is dispensation. The dispensation in our discussion spans the 'centuries'. In its programming for God's purpose it also relates to the nations, especially Israel, in whom all the families of the world will be blessed, and that election is irrevocable. That is our subject, here focused on the Millennial Reign of Peace as known from the Book of Revelation. When one unit of time changes to another, some attributes will be retained, some will disappear and new ones will be added. The capital of the knowledge of faith, built up in the past stages, is only cumulative. Should be, for through negligence knowledge was lost that is now ready to be cleared of dust.

13.65 – The Unfinished One

It is implicitly assumed that the Bible describes universal history. In Isaiah 46:10 it says: "[I am God] declaring the end from the beginning". Which end? There is no end of all things or the end of all ages of ages. God undoubtedly has in mind all ages of the ages, but that does not mean that He immediately proclaims this in detail. Because that

90) Ephesians 1:10 states: "That in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things." In Ephesians 3:2: "You have heard about the dispensation of God's grace that was given to me." In Colossians 1:25: "...according to the stewardship from God which was given to me." In Ephesians 1:10, instead of dispensation, the word 'stage' can be used, and in verse 3:2 'administration'.

is insufficiently understood, people have come to see the judgment from the Book of Revelation as the last one and the destruction as literal and total. But that is not so obvious and may well be a point of discussion. The Talmud teaches that the Bible only deals with the 'seventh day', the day of making (Olam Assia), in which God transferred the task of completing the work of creation to Man (Adam means man). Remember that Jesus is also human and from that quality was co-creative (in the meaning of assia), which is in line with God's covenant with Adam. Of course, Jesus the Anointed One is God and it is because of this that his work of completion was perfect, without blemish.

Dispensationalism often uses a division into seven periods, supported by various Biblical references. Indeed, the number seven occurs frequently in the Bible. Check your concordance. The most important point of reference is found in the creation account, in which the seventh day of creation, is a kind of 'Unfinished One'. The Genesis 2:3 original text reads: "[In the previous 6 days] God created in order to be able to make [during the 7th still in progress]." This special day is still going towards its final destination. The end of it announces the beginning of the 8th day. This can be compared to the harmonic octave. The eighth note is the first of a new octave. About the yet-to-be octave in God's plan with the world, the Bible says virtually nothing.

The seventh-day Sabbath is reminiscent of the world to come in which, in a new dispensation, God's people will lie in green pastures by the waters of rest (menuhot). (Ps. 23: 1) Menuha is the basic theme of the Sabbath, which proceeds from an intrinsically positive demand from which joy, peace and perfection spring, in short: holiness. The perfected world belongs to the world to come, *"for humanity has not yet entered its rest and does not rest from his works as God did from his. (...) If the people of God had already been able to rest in the Promised Land, God would not have spoken later of another day."* (paraphrase of Hebr. 4:10, 4:8)

The Bible shows that God divides history into periods. In fact, He defines time in terms of hours, months, years. It is therefore not illogical that God carries out his plan for the world in phases that each time come to an end, such as, *"...the hour to reap has come."* (Rev. 14:15) How God arranges these phases is something that theologians cannot agree on, which does not mean that the principle itself is wrong. Here the saying goes: "So many heads, so many opinions", while there can be only one explanation, the one intended by God, whereby it is quite possible that different schemes overlap each other; there is for instance a division in three: the time of the law, the time of grace, and that of the Heavenly Kingdom. Essential to the schemes of dispensationalism, and thus also for our article, is the Reign of Peace of a thousand years (the Millennium), which raises the question of whether Jesus comes before or after the Reign of Peace. There are pre- and postmillennialists. And even amillennialists, mostly Roman Catholic, who assume that the Biblical Reign of Peace should only be seen on a symbolic plane, representing the time in which we now live. I call that intellectual acrobatics. Where is the peace? Peace in this sublunary world leads a poor life.

Strangely enough, all agree on the 'final' judgment, although the Bible nowhere speaks of the latter. And the elements that melt with fervent heat, you might put forward, mentioned in the Peter Letter? Notably in 2 Peter 3:10-13: *"The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. (...) [That day] the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat. Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new Heavens and a new Earth in which righteousness dwells."* Why do 'elements'

necessarily have to be a material world? The Greek word in Peter's letter for elements is 'stoicheion'. Stoicheion indicates 'an ordered system' or 'coherence' but also a 'principle', even 'spiritual principle'. The verb form (stoicheo) in early colloquialism meant something like 'to be in line'. Stoicheion has several derived meanings such as 'the length of a shadow of the sundial' and 'the main constituents of the cosmos', but those are not applicable here. There is therefore good reason to distinguish an intangible component in 'elements' as well. To conclude on these verses that the day, Peter is speaking of, equates to the final end of the earth is incorrect. As outlined in another article, called "The Time of God's Active Involvement", 'the day of the Lord' refers to the time that precedes the Reign of Peace and this does not precede the final Biblical judgment, as described in Revelation 20:11-12: *"The Earth and the heaven fled away from His face. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God (...) and the dead were judged according to their works."*

What is the foundation of our existence? The spiritual. So why not understand the saying of Peter's letter as the restoration of the paradisiacal state? The earth will be turned upside down but will not be destroyed! Only the elementary basis of the inclination to evil will perish or cease to exist. Before the Reign of Peace starts, the evil inclination, in Hebrew Jetser ha-Ra, must first be annihilated. The spiritual, our psyche, in which the Jetzer ha-Ra resides, represents the elements. Job 26:7 says: *"God hangs the world on the intangible (b'lee mah)."* Since the invisible is the basis of the visible, the known elementary particles, atoms and the like, are actually not truly elementary. After the inner reformation, actually a transfiguration, we look forward to a continuation of life, a better life, for God loves the world and seeks its preservation. (John 3:1)

Noah must have known the creation account

Noah must have known the creation account as written by Moses. In popular traditions, creation stories were passed on orally from generation to generation. For example, it is assumed that the Illias and Odyssey by Homer have been recorded after a centuries long chain of troebadoers. So they were not invented by him. And mind you, there are too many elements in these stories that deviate from the typical Greek culture. The 'discovery' of Troy in 1873 by Heinrich Schliemann is therefore a joke, as is Agamemnon's mask. Troy never existed because Troy is the city of every war! The Battle of Stalingrad was also Troy. There may be a Troy-like scenario that served as a model, but certainly not Schliemann's Troy. It is therefore very plausible that the Biblical creation account was known before Moses recorded it. The story was known, but it has been written down with God's own words.

13.66 – God's Cycle under the Microscope

After Israel became God's special partner in the work of creation, God instituted the Sabbath. Abraham Joshua Heschel, a leading Jewish theologian of the last century, explained that the creation story has received this form to fulfill the Sabbath ideal. Noah and his ancestors must have known its schematic layout. Yet they will not have kept a Sabbath in the manner known to us.

The creation account tells that when the highest beings - Adam and Eve - were called into existence and the creation initiative was done, that from then on the Creator was allowed to keep his own Sabbath. Then also the human work began to steer history towards the goal set by God. In Genesis 2:2 is written: *"...and God ended his work,*

which He had done, and rested on the seventh day.” However, the work of creation did not end. It was transferred from God to man and sealed by a covenant at Mount Horeb. I wish to emphasize that the Sabbath ordinance, revealed at the Horeb, was completely new and was not common in Israel and the surrounding cultures of the time, and so it may be considered a precious gift to humanity, a foretaste of something greater, He who instituted this ordinance not for Himself but for us. (Mk. 2:27) At the time of Horeb, Israel’s festive cycle was also instituted. On closer inspection, the regular work week represents a mini-festive cycle in analogy to the seven-day creational process that irresistibly heads toward the eighth day.

A key to the duration of the human labor in the divinely determined seventh day of creation is found in the chapter where it says that the elements will melt with fervent heat: *“With the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.”* (2 Peter 3:8) Yes, but since Adam, forerunner of the seventh day of creation, thousands of years have passed and not 1x thousand. Yet there is a way out. We recognize here a fractal set (see Wikipedia under Mandelbrot). In such a set, any part has the same pattern, only on a smaller scale, something that is common in natural manifestations such as in the branches of a tree. The first impression is different, but a closer look reveals that the structure of the small is the same as the large. There is a Biblical feast that points to this: the Jubilee of Leviticus 25, the eighth great feast. There is a thorough study on this topic by John Sietze Bergsma.⁹¹⁾ I was happy with that, because there is hardly any literature about it. He shows that the practical application of the feast has gradually faded into the background in favor of an end-time theology.⁹²⁾



As is known, there is a Jubilee celebration every 50th year, following 7 x 7 years. Then all people will be restored to their rights, debts forgiven and slaves freed. A nice ideal, but already at an early stage in Israel’s existence that feast fell into disuse because the demands turned out to be too harsh for an urbanized and sedentary society. No sources indicate that the Jubilee was ever put into practice obeying all the provisions of the Book Leviticus. It is therefore pure assumption that early in Israel’s existence this feast was respected. In fact, there are indications that this was never the case. Bergsma points to a Jewish source (Bab. Ned. 61a) on page 151 that the Jubilee was counted at 49 years after the beginning of the Exodus and 50 before (the Jubilee provisions were not entirely new). Because the 50th year was not correctly celebrated, it was skipped in the counting. The 49th applied to temple dedications (if appropriate).⁹³⁾ This explains why the Prophet Daniel fits the coming of Christ the King (the messiah prince) into a frame of seven sevens (for the rebuilding and dedication of the Temple), and 490 years: 49 +

91) “The Jubilee from Leviticus to Qumran (a history of interpretation)” by John Sietze Bergsma - Brill Academic Publishers, Leiden♦Boston # 2007.

92) Ezekiel 46:7 indicates familiarity with the workings of the Jubilee in this historical period. His vision of the restored temple, in analogy with the restoration of the paradisiacal state (Ezekiel 40-44 especially 43:1-7), begins in the first verse (40:1) with a reference to half a Jubilee year.

434 plus one seven (7+62+1). (Dan. 9:24-26) The underlying symbolism is not difficult to decipher, although it is usually not realized that the very last temple consecration will be that of our body, not of a few devout Christians but the apotheosis of all human-kind, the by then wholly sanctified humanity. Contrary to the foregoing, the passage discussing the dedication of Solomon's Palace and the Temple underscores that in the first period of Israel's national existence the Jubilee was respected, which occurred exactly 500 years after the beginning of the Exodus, as an attentive reading of 1 Kings Ch. 6 to 8 seems to indicate. Bergsma concludes his studies with:

«« In Second Temple Judaism [therefore after the Babylonian exile] (...) the association of the Jubilee [Year] with liberation is not lost, but eschatologized. The liberation that the Jubilee represents becomes identified almost exclusively with the dawning of the Eschaton [the Millennium]. Even at Qumran (...) there is little or no evidence that the Jubilee Year was observed legally and economically, even if the Jubilee cycles were calculated.⁹⁴⁾ Increasingly, in the Second Temple period, the arrival of the eschatological Jubilee is associated with the coming of a messianic figure (...) Finally, a shift occurs in Second Temple literature concerning the type of debt the Jubilee addresses. While the original legislation was clearly concerned with monetary debt, the later texts apply the Jubilee to moral-spiritual debt, namely sin. (...) These general observations may be of assistance in evaluating the significance of jubiliary allusions or motifs in the New Testament. »»

There is a point of criticism here. Since the Jubilee begins after 7 x 7 years have elapsed, the Jubilee can never be identical to the Eschaton, as ancient Judaism thought, but symbolizes what follows. The fiftieth (7x7 plus 1) is therefore equal to the eighth (7 plus 1). And the number eight points to the eighth day of creation. Paradoxically, this indicates that the Jubilee is the most important celebration. To be in disuse now is transient. In our dispensation it forms the picture frame for all other religious festivities, the finishing touch. Perhaps the other festivities (those of the current church year) will one day become the picture frame for the Jubilee... I do not want to withhold from you a quote from Isaac Da Costa, a famous Jew converted to Christianity, discussing the seventh day of creation:

«« The sanctification of the first day of the week was typically foreshadowed by the day on which a little servant from Israel was to be circumcised. That was on the 'eighth' day after his birth. Why the eighth day? Because the first week, the first seven days, represent natural life; but with the first day something new begins that does not belong to the first, but to the second creation - the new Man. Circumcision sets him apart, sanctifies him before God. What that sign of the new birth doesn't imply! The shedding of blood points to justification: the cutting off and throwing away of something that can be missed, to putting off and putting away the old human [flesh], in short sanctification. »»

You can object that nothing can surpass Jesus' Easter Sacrifice and that, therefore, Passover can never be the picture frame for what should become the Jubilee. But what was 'the' Sacrifice for? To return Man to his original state. The Sacrifice was not only

93) Here Bergsma refers to "Sabbatical, Jubilee, and the Temple of Solomon" by Lee W. Casperson - Brill # 2003 (pp. 283-96).

94) The Qumran texts (at the Dead Sea) don't reflect the views of a small community having lived in Qumran. They refer to various groups or communities scattered all over Palestine and elsewhere in the Greco-Roman world, as the internal evidence proves, for the texts reveal a range of beliefs that must have belonged to a large number of Jewish communities. It was not until much later that, under the influence of the Talmud and a strict education, a uniformity of thought and action emerged.

made for reconciliation but also for renewal. (Col. 3:10) That is the crux of the Jubilee: everyone's restoration to his original and glorified state; you may say: paradisiacal state. What is worth more: the payment or the item purchased? Always the item, which is the new human being, because otherwise the sum would not have been paid. Indeed, God so much loves the world, loves all of us, each of us!

Romans 8 speaks of the sharing of the children of God in the glorification of Christ's body and not only that: the creation too will be redeemed from the bondage of corruption and have its share. Johan Stringer knows how to interpret that well in his well written Dutch book "Discover your Heritage" (Ontdek je Erfdeel # 2009 - p. 84):

«« As Paul presented it thus far [in the letter to the Romans], our inheritance [in Christ] has everything to do with a restoration of creation, including the earth. The freedom and glory - or inheritance - of the adopted sons of God is manifested first of all in a renewal of creation. The "*sons of God*" are delivered from death and destruction in this creation. This does not mean that they are torn away from creation and leave creation behind, or that creation is 'dissolved'. No, creation itself participates in this renewal. Since the fall, the creation itself has been waiting for the day that the sons of God will receive their inheritance, for on that day the creation itself will also be jubilant and radiantly renewed from the iron grip of [pernicious] death. All creation is like a woman groaning and giving birth, who nevertheless endures her suffering full of hope: she expects new life. We sigh along in that travail. When our glory is revealed, creation will share in this glorious reality without submission to corruption. Thus, we will celebrate our inheritance with and in a creation that will share the same glory with us, yes, in the same material creation that we know now, but greatly renewed. By material I mean 'material', 'tangible', made up of atoms and molecules. »»

13.67 – Shall a Nation be Born at Once?

Having determined that the seventh day of creation, when examined, is again a self-contained weekly cycle of seven dispensations (a so-called fractal), let's dive into the details. We're going to strengthen the magnifying glass. And guess what? Each creation day is typified 'in the beginning' by the birth of a characteristic figure: creation day 1 – Let there be light; day 2 – firmament; day 3 – dry land; day 4 – heavenly lights; day 5 – floating souls; day 6 – earthbound souls; day 7 – sanctifying blessing. That last day does not come to an end until its sanctification is completed. That day is in the present tense, for we are living in it. Since one day for God equals a thousand years, the seven dispensations within day 7 are seven millennia. In the unfolding millennia, we recognize the same theme in the advent of characteristic persons. However, they are more than signposts and have a shared creative responsibility with God. In the act of blessing God will continue to bless, provided his partner, man, is open to it. It follows that God's seventh day rest is not inactivity (inactivity versus bara), but an activity differently. God's involvement never ends (Ps. 121:4), is even essential.

Genesis 2:4 begins with.: "*These are the births of heavens and the earth when they were created.*" The distinctive figures of the seven millennia are therefore births and not events. The first Reign of the seventh creative day begins with Adam dying in 930 AM (Anno Mundi).⁹⁵⁾ The second with Noah's birth in 1056 AM; he dies in 2006 AM. The third millennium begins with the birth of Abraham in 2008 AM; he 'only' gets to be 175 years old. The fourth begins with David at 2944 AM; he dies in 3013 AM. Its meaning is evident. The fifth starts with the birth of our Lord and Savior in 3997 AM

or 8 BC; He dies in 26 AD.⁹⁶⁾ The sixth millennium begins in the then Christianized Europe, where there were great expectations on the threshold of the new millennium, but also fear. If one man deserves the nomination, it is Emperor Otto III, called the *mirabilia mundi* (the wonder of the world). Born in 4985 AM, he dies at the age of 21 in the year of our Lord 1002 AD. He died without the hoped-for Reign of Peace having begun or the prerequisites for it having been created. His mission miserably failed, not by his own doing, as with Adam, but because the people did not want to follow him. This does not detract from his special calling and place in history. The pair of Otto and Pope Sylvester symbolize the coming Reign of Peace, of which the unified cooperation between the secular and spiritual authorities is the special feature. It is still too early to make a definitive judgment on Otto's unique significance, for the past 6th millennium has not yet been properly mapped out with regard to its spiritual aspect.



Sukkoth at de Kotel (Tempel Wall in Jerusalem)

For the seventh millennium, the crucial question arises: who is the figure for that? This millennium started chronologically with the Twin Towers debacle in New York. It has not yet arrived to the fulfillment of its joyful promises. Not yet. Will that figure be the

95) The chronology used is that of Ivan Panin (1855-1942), an American of Russian descent who was able to make a continuous Biblical chronology thanks to a number of chronological keys offered in the New Testament.

96) Jesus was working in contrary to Adam in everything. It has been suggested (the source eluded me) that Adam was 33 years old when he fell in disgrace, and that would explain why Jesus' atoning sacrifice was in his 33rd year. Genesis 5:5 says: "And all the days that Adam lived were 930 years." For the eight other patriarchs in that chapter the word 'lived' is missing. Yours truly explains this 'lived' as Adam 'living on earth after the fall', which means that Adam in fact lived to be older than 930 (actually 930 + 33). Actually, the Anno Mundi calendar starts immediately after Adam and Eve's exile from Paradise.

Jesus was born in 8 BC when the great census was taken and so He was crucified on 26 AD. Consequently, a lot of dates shifted with regard to the conventional chronology. Because of this, John the Baptist's mission lasted not several months but three and a half years to give him sufficient opportunity to pave Jesus' public mission. The underlying evidence can be found in "Proofs of the Life and Death of Jesus", written by yours truly.

Prince of Peace known as Shiloh, the one sent? (Gen. 49:10) According to an established prophetic tradition within the Roman Church, this Prince of Peace, referred to as the Great Monarch, will not be Jesus Messiah, but an ordinary man who will be covered by Jesus with a special grace, who from that moment on has little to do with the person he once was.⁹⁷⁾ This covering would be so complete that this figure flows over prophetically into the Messiah; they can hardly be distinguished from each other! The truthfulness of this prediction may be subject to different opinions. In my view there exists an even more important candidate for the Millennium, not a person but a nation. You have guessed it right: the State of ISRAEL, date of birth Dec. 9, 1917, which is the day when General Edmond Allenby captured Jerusalem without a need to fight for it.⁹⁸⁾ Does not Isaiah 66:7-8 says: *“Before she was in labor, she gave birth; Before her pain came, she delivered a male child. (...) Shall a nation be ‘born’ at once?”* Sure enough! And in the next verse (cf. Vulgate): *“Shall I, God, who lets others have children, don’t have children Myself? Shall I, who give offspring to others, remain sterile Myself?”* After this list of exceptional births, the question arises: who will be the eighth day figure that emerges after the final stage? In the same vein it will not be a person, not even a nation, but all nations. It will be the whole world in the apotheosis of the inner state!

13.68 – The Meaning of the Calendars of Israel

The liturgical calendar of Israel is based on the harvest cycle, with a symbolic interpretation for each event. The harvest season spans seven months with festivities running from Nissan 15 to Tishrei 22. The Passover Festival (Easter) is in the month of Nissan and celebrates the liberation from Egyptian slavery and the birth of Israel as a nation, even more so it celebrates God’s chosen people among the nations. On the second day of Passover, the freshly harvested barley is offered. Various harvests continue throughout the season, with finally the wine harvest during Sukkoth (Feast of Tabernacles), which falls in the seventh month, the month Tishrei, the Sabbath-month of the year. Sukkoth is to the other festivals what the sabbath is to the other six days of the week. This completes the harvest cycle, and a number of cropless months follow before the new cycle starts. One interpretation of this arrangement is that the harvest cycle points to the old world with its sweat and tears and weakness of the flesh. Sukkoth, as a final festival, is thus the end of the old dispensation and at the same time a fitting foreshadowing of the coming age when each and everyone will live in peace and brotherhood under the reign of the Great Monarch. Sukkoth is in Jewish practice the pre-eminent borderline festival. It is the Great Festival, the culmination and object of all the appointed times. Just as the weekly sabbath is a foretaste of the Millennium Reign, this happens to be the case with Sukkoth.

The other cycle that merits our attention starts at the Jewish New Year, known as Rosh Ha-shana, on Tishrei 1. I like to call this new cycle, the cycle of the new world. It is

97) See: “Demain...?, d’après les Concordances frappantes de 132 Prophéties anciennes et modernes” (Tomorrow... ?, based on the striking similarities of 132 ancient and modern prophecies), by Baron de Novaye - Ed. Lethielleux, Paris # 1934. This does not mean that such prophecies are taken seriously in the Catholic Church. Actually, they are at a loss what to do with them, even if those who uttered them enjoy a certain authority.

98) Usually, the proclamation of the State of Israel on May 14, 1948, is seen as the birth of the State of Israel, which was later ratified by the United Nations, but the Bible indicates differently. After all, Isaiah says that before she went into labor she had to give birth. Political independence has been accompanied by much struggle; the shaking off of the Turkish/Ottoman yoke has been easy. That is why I choose Dec. 9, 1917 as the date of its birth.

important to note that in the month of Tishrei, the seventh month of the old world overlaps with the first month of the new world. Thus an intermezzo arises, a kind of interregnum, which does not yet know the perfection of the new world, but is already much more perfect than the previous periods. In this we recognize the Millennial Reign of Peace. This overlap explains why the annual reading cycle begins immediately after Sukkoth - on Tishrei 23 - and not on Rosh Ha-shana (1 Tishrei), as would seem more logical. This particular day, the Simkhat Torah, is amongst the most joyous of the Jewish calendar.⁹⁹⁾ The annual reading cycle starts, as can be expected, at Brei' sheet, as the Jews call Genesis, but the youngest day, when humankind will have been set free definitely, starts at a different scroll not yet written. Sukkoth is the seventh and last festival that immediately precedes Simkhat Torah and Sukkoth thus nicely fits the Millennium Age. It is no accident that Sukkoth, whose very name indicates its temporal significance, has an additional attribute – in addition to being a harvest festival: that of commemorating the Exodus from Egypt, which also stands central with Pesach, also on a fifteenth of the month. We eagerly look forward to the great day that this exodus from Egypt will allegorically become an exodus for the whole human race!!

It is typical that New Year's Day, on the first day of Tishrei, is also known as the Day of Judgement. The first and the tenth day of the month of Tishrei developed into official days of repentance and also, in the course of time, became known in the synagogue as the Yamim Nora'im, the frightful-fearful days with, in between, an intermezzo of peace. In the pre-exilic time, New Year's Day was on the equinox of Tishrei 10, when day and night are of equal length. After the exile, however, a backward adjustment was made to Tishrei 1 with an eight-day gap in between, which marks the interregnum, the intermezzo of peace. On these issues, see "Proofs of the Life and Death of Jesus" under "The Sun Miracle", which is available on the Internet.

Strikingly, after just seventy years of exile the festive cycle of Israel has been shuffled, also with regard to the liturgical significance of certain feasts. The cheerfully tinted Feast of Tabernacles was placed after the Rite of Azazel (scapegoat), when in former times it used to stand before it. And Yom Kippur replaced the Rite of Azazel. Originally, New Year's Day was observed for the inauguration of Temples and immediately followed Sukkoth, as it was still observed under Ezra and Nehemiah. It later merged with the day named in Lev. 23:24 and Num. 29:1, known in the Bible as Yom Teruah, which means 'the day of the blowing' (of the Shofar trumpet). Teruah was a simple ceremony that may have marked the difference between the lunar and solar year, the one being about eleven days shorter than the other. The changes in the liturgical calendar were many and evolved over an extended period. How exactly and why these changes were introduced is still insufficiently understood. Formerly, Israel had followed a solar year in which both equinoxes, at Eastern and Tabernacles, played the essential part. After the Babylonian exile the Jewish nation gradually adopted the nineteen-year lunar-solar Babylonian cycle.

99) A cycle that has often shown its ugly face accounts for the saddest day in Jewish history. That is the 9th of the month of Ab (July-August), date of destruction of the first Temple (559 BC) and the second one (70 AD) and date of the expulsions from England (1290) and Spain (1492), and also the day in 1942 that the Treblinka gas chambers were started, that marked the beginning of the Holocaust (the Nazis may have chosen this date deliberately). The Talmud says that the 9th of Ab is cursed because on that day the spies returned from the Promised Land bringing desperate tidings (Num. 13 and 14). Here too, on the Simkhat Torah, according to the prophecy of Zechariah 8:19, the day of mourning will have turned into joy.

Despite the deviations from the original calendar, yours truly assumes that these are directed by God and have a prophetic character. An attempt to give substance to this leads to the following conclusions. The Exodus, to which Sukkoth refers, lasted for forty years. Sukkoth (booth) indicates temporality in its name. Sukkoth has an additional feature: in addition to being a harvest festival, it commemorates the Exodus from Egypt, when Israel's enemy was given a taste of its own medicine. A similar situation evolved at the end of the Exodus, known as Baal Peor. (Num. 25) Israel then had to fight against Midian. That was the episode with the great Magician Balaam who tried to, but failed to curse Israel.

At an early stage the messianic kingdom was already seen by the ancient Israelites as the reign of a thousand years. According to MDM's prophecy of May 28, 2012, this should be taken literally: *"Know that the 1000 years referred to in the Book of Revelation means just that."* By the seventh day, the self-repeating degenerative cycle will not be broken yet, except for those who went through the great tribulation. Revelation 20:6 reads: *"Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."* The Saints, who will rule with the Twelve Apostles, will from the very beginning have been exalted in the paradisiacal state.

According to prophecies from various sources, like those from Marie-Julie Jahenny, Sœur Nativitas, Abbé Voclin, Josef Stockert and those from the children of La Salette, the definite and total turn-around will only take place 'after' the 7th day in what is the restoration of the paradisiacal state, which then applies to all. The prophecy of La Salette of September 19th 1846 goes as follows: *"This peace among people will be short-lived: 25 years of plentiful harvests [25 is not to be taken literally] will make them forget that the sins of men are the cause of all the suffering that appears on the earth."* As well as Marie-Julie Jahenny (Jan. 27th 1881): *"When the king of kings dies, i.e., the earthly king [and thus the Great Monarch], who will have sown the seeds of that beautiful peace, that peace will disappear again, to erupt once more in a bloody crisis, then..."*

When things turn sour at the end of the 7th day, as those prophecies foresee, a most terrible seducer will enter the scene, but his reign is to be short-lived. At that time another great apostasy will occur, because Satan is given permission to deceive the nations. He then drags along those who have feigned submission and are probably jealous of the immortality of the saints who, in their perspective, would not have wanted to share the elixir of life with the others. Then the rebels will encircle the camp of the saints, Jerusalem, the beloved city: *"But fire fell from heaven and consumed them."* And then comes the Last Judgment. (Rev. 20:7-15)

Finally, I would like to mention JNSR's message of Sept. 18th 2009 in which Jesus says that, as with God's people then, He will open the Red Sea to lead each one to the Promised Land, here referred to as the "Civilization of Love". Jesus continues: *"After a concerted effort, the Kingdom of God on Earth will be ready to begin."* Because I assume that the 'Civilization of Love' equates the Millennial Reign of Peace, and that the Last Judgment is a messenger of yet another new era, I feel free to conclude that a 'Kingdom of God on Earth' will follow the Last Judgment. The battle here on earth will then be fought forever. After all, Lucifer and his cronies, being the ultimate instigators of evil, will then have been definitely plunged into the abyss after mankind, like silver, has been purified seven times in the seething crucible. (Ps. 12:6) All the slag had to come out and that took time, seven thousand years. Afterwards, there is no need anymore for a general judgment.



‘Otto III was More than Emperor’

Based on:

ANNO DOMINI 1000 - ANNO DOMINI 2000

The Thousand Years at the Grace of the Dead GOD

And the Secret of World History

This treatise is an anthology from the first chapter of Frank de Graaff's book "Anno Domini 1000 - Anno Domini 20000" (Publisher J.H. Kok - Kampen # 1977), and can be considered a supplement to the preceding article: "The Jewish Festive Calendar of Redeeming Grace".

Emperor Otton III can be regarded as a figure of the one who is to come, referred to in Old Testament tradition as Silo (the sent one), the coming Prince of Peace, who is eagerly anticipated. After Adam, each time someone of great historical importance was born on the threshold of a new millennium, and so it must be around the year 1000 AD. The second millennium since Adam begins with the birth of Noah, the third of Abraham, the fourth of David and the fifth with the birth of Jesus. Finally, the sixth millennium with that of Otton III, who was born in the year 980 of our era.

Emperor Otton III, whose life and era cannot be understood with the usual historical rhetoric, was attributed the epithet of Mirabilia Mundi or "miracle of the world". This ruler represents the perfect image of the king of kings, foretold in the Bible, the sovereign ruler of God's nation on earth, who will govern the world in close political and ecclesiastical agreement, in a way no one had ever witnessed. The opening words of one of Otton's documents are quite revealing: "Otton, slave of the Apostles and according to the will of the Lord Saviour, August Emperor of the Romans. We proclaim Rome capital of the world. We recognise that the Latin church is the mother of all churches." ¹⁰⁰⁾ But it was of no avail. Not yet! His aspirations were still premature, but that does not mean that they were devoid of realism. In certain ways, Norman Cantor says, we may consider the Ottonian period a microcosm of the later vicissitudes of our Western civilization. Dr. De Graaff comments (p. 16): "Never before a child has been brought into this world in whom the Christian culture was more invested. At a time when the people awaited God's final judgement and the fearsome destruction of our Christian civilization, but also seriously tried to prevent such a thing, Otton III is born, like a divine disposition and last opportunity to save the Christian body."

What follows is from “Anno Domini 1000 - Anno Domini 2000”, except for what is in-between brackets. Additions by Hubert Luns. (quotes pp. 62-63, 66-67, 69-71, 78)

14.69 – The Prelude

[After his victories the sovereign Otton I descends in 961 to Italy to receive the imperial crown]. The [persona¹⁰¹⁾ of the] Emperorship [of East and West], restored in him, makes a vigorous attempt to renew the unity of ecumenism. Otton largely restores Charlemagne's Empire. (...) The papacy is liberated, (...) Islam is beaten back. All this is connected with the great spiritual reformation of Cluny, which aimed to restore the bond between Heaven and Earth. Otton I actually put himself at the head of this reformation. His efforts to forge the unity of Christian civilization are carried by a [lofty] spiritual principle. (...) The sinful conflicts [in Christian civilization] must be dissolved. Justice, righteousness, and mercy must reign throughout ecumenism. Otton I tirelessly sought to accomplish all this. He was a high-minded, impressive genius. The last thing that still stood in the way of Christian unity was the pretense of Byzantium, for the Eastern Romans did not recognize the Emperorship of Otton. The Hellenistic gods (celestial rulers or angelic princes) wanted to supplant the direct influence of the god (or celestial prince) of ecumenism. (...) [With great difficulty the emperor managed to arrange a marriage between his son and the Byzantine princess Theophano that was concluded in 972]. That fulfilled the aim of Otto I's pursuit and allowed him to witness the basis for the renewed unity of ecumenism. In this painstakingly arranged marriage shines the apotheosis of the reign of Otton I. Already one year later he dies at Quedlinburg.

The brilliant Otton II follows the calling of his father Otton I. The life of Emperor Otton II also clearly reveals that the god of ecumenism acts in him. The Emperor knows how to subdue rebellions everywhere, in which the old powers want to regain their independence. (...) Superbly, the god in the Emperor imposes his authority on the powers that resist the unity of ecumenism. The Hellenistic gods, however, resist more than ever. They seek to remove Byzantium from the god's immediate authority. They are doing this in a way that has had great consequences for the Eastern Roman Empire, yes, which ultimately led to the downfall of Byzantium. Their rebellion against the god of ecumenism drives them into a [syncretistic] alliance with the Islam, which is led by a newly emerged 'celestial ruler', the Archangel of Arabia. In this act it appears that Hellenism dominated Byzantium more than Christianity. In the course of history it has become clear what a fatal act was perpetrated. Byzantium betrayed ecumenism. It refused to accept the god of ecumenism other than indirectly [by means of an outer form]. To obstruct its immediate regime, Byzantium allies itself in a monster alliance with Islam. This results [in the passage of time] that Byzantium will be losing territory upon territory to Islam...

(...) Despite its victories, despite a true spiritual recovery being revealed, the reformation of Otton I and Otton II was not strong enough to avert impending judgment. The god of the West, the guardian angel of Christian civilization had heeded the admonition of Israel's God: *“Defend the poor and the orphan; do justice to the afflicted and needy, snatch them out of the hand of the wicked.”* In both emperors, the god had truly sought to obey this command. However, the hardening of Christendom had become so great

100) “The Civilization of the Middle Ages” by Norman F. Cantor, Harper Collins Publ. - New York # 1993 (completely revised and expanded). Previous editions of this book were entitled: “Medieval History: The Life and Death of a Civilization” # 1974 (revised), 1968 (revised), 1963. Quote p. 216.

101) Someone's persona is the aspect of their character or nature that they present to other people, perhaps in contrast to their real character or true nature.

that conversion did not happen. Despite the mighty and resplendent restoration of the Ottonian reformation, in which the god of the land of the descending sun sought to save his culture, Christendom itself did not convert. Rome, Germania, Byzantium destroyed the unity of ecumenism by throwing off the yoke of the god of ecumenism. The amazing thing happened: [the personification of] the god converts; his culture, however, does not. [In this sense one can speak of a failed mission, as with Adam, although with him there were not yet a people and culture. Adam's failure had profound consequences for the course of history, as did Otton's failure and that of his son afterwards; the disastrous developments in the second Christian millennium cannot be separated from this.]

14.70 – Something Divine is Revealed

From the marriage of Otton II, the Emperor of the West, and Theophano, the daughter of the East Roman Emperor Romanus II, a son was born in 980, the later Otton III, who by birth already represents the unity of the entire Christian body. (...) [It can rightly be said that] Otton III was the incarnate unity of the Christian culture. Otton I and Otton II were instruments of the god. Was Otton III more than an instrument? (...) The facts of Otton's III life give rise to this conjecture. It is obvious that he had been taken over by the god. His high moral life, his brilliant deeds at a very young age, his high sense of vocation, his seclusion in life, all point in this direction. (...) Pope Sylvester II touched on this secret by seeing something divine in young Otton: *"Something divine is revealed, I do not know what, when someone by birth Greek and by authority Roman who, as it were, by inheritance takes possession of the treasures of Greek and Roman wisdom."*



(...) [Otton II dies when his son is three years old.] Not yet fifteen years old, Otton III himself takes the reins of government into his own hands. All his actions are aimed at restoring ecumenism and making manifest the City of God on earth. Then it seems, ...that just before the breaking of the year one thousand, that then the City of God on earth stands to be revealed. [As a final preparatory act] Otton manages in 999 to appoint his beloved teacher Gerbert of Reims as Pope Sylvester II [with whom he wants to achieve his goal in concerted action]. [The choice of the name Sylvester represents a conscious effort to associate with the papacy of Saint Sylvester I (314-325), whose pontificate had long been considered a model of papal and imperial cooperation.¹⁰²⁾]

More than any of his predecessors, Otton III brought near the moment of the realization of the State of God. His deeds are of an almost unearthly radiance. While he is only a boy by age, he is leading the entire Empire. By then he is already a great general. His way of life recalls the otherworldly. He lives in ascetic purity. Though he is gracious and generous to all who are near him, he cannot be among them all the time. At meals, for instance, he used to sit alone at a semicircular table that was higher than the table of his guests. He did this not out of vanity but so that the radiance of his being would not

102) "Lives of the Popes", Richard P. McBrien - HarperSanFrancisco # 1997. The quote is from Pope nr. 139.

be too intolerable to those around him. Not only by his great deeds does he want to bring the City of God on earth. As the head of ecumenism, he wants to atone for the iniquity of Christendom. Otto practices the utmost asceticism in which he does not shrink from self-flagellation. It is remarkable that at these occasions he never shed the imperial attributes. In this way he expresses that he is not doing penance for himself personally, but as Emperor for Christendom, whose head he is, (...) in order to suffer vicariously the judgment that should have fallen on Christendom. (...) It is for this reason that he calls himself [for some time]: *"Slave of Jesus Christ and Emperor Augustus of the Romans, according to the will of God, who is our Redeemer and Deliverer."*

(...) The notion of vicarious sacrifice belongs to the deepest notions of human nature. Know that the universal judgment and punishment are never expressions of vengeance from the highest God [for those are petty terms]. They are conditions of restoration and re-creation, and they are thus irrevocable. God, who is Love, does not want his Creation – being called into being out of love – to be ruined by sin. Therefore, judgment and punishment are connected with the love of God. Punishment is intended as an act of re-creation. Since [mankind is one family and] the punishment is not retribution, but an act of re-creation, it can also be undergone vicariously. [And if borne in the right frame of mind] it is a mighty act of restoration. There is also something else. In this vicarious suffering, the restorative power of [brotherly] love is mightily revealed.

(...) All these things [and much more] make it increasingly plausible, that the assumption is correct: Otton III was more than Emperor! The god of the West, the patron angel of Christendom, incarnated himself in Otton III shortly before the divine sentence of the year 1000. For us late-born people, this assumption is difficult to fathom. Accepting the assumption, however, makes very much insightful what otherwise would remain totally incomprehensible.

14.71 – Otto's Death is the Turning Point in Time

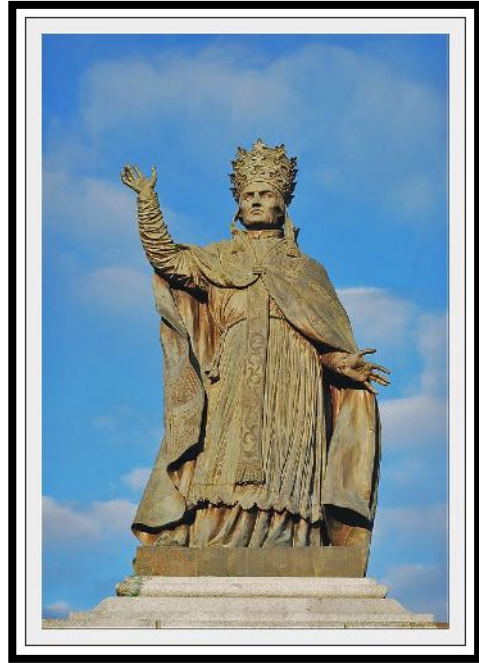
(...) [[By his vicarious intercession], the god of the Occident brought upon himself the death sentence that otherwise had to be executed on his culture. The execution of the death sentence becomes manifest in history in the sudden death of Emperor Otton III, on Jan. 23 of the year 1002. Apparently, the execution of the sentence could no longer be delayed. With the death of Otton III, the ecumenism of East and West was violated forever. (...) Generally, [his contemporaries] intuitively understood that in Otton's death a metahistorical event revealed itself. The following poem by Leo of Vercelli, a contemporary of the Emperor, discloses this quite eloquently. The poem was written immediately after Otton's death and goes as follows:

**That the world mourn, that Rome mourn, that Christendom mourn.
That no song may sound in Rome, that the imperial palace may shriek!
Under the absence of the Emperor, the centuries are in confusion.
While our Otton dies, death rises in the world.
The sky has changed its face and the earth its appearance.
The wolves will devour the people, the end of everything will be.
Soon the sky will collapse and the elements will perish.**

The death of Emperor Otton III is experienced as an event that moves heaven and earth. Because her fate is determined by that death, it follows that the whole world must mourn. Rome, the capital of ecumenism, must mourn. Christendom must mourn, because the one who had come into the world to save it has died. Therefore, the singing in Rome

must fall silent, the singing that once expressed the joy of the expectation of the universal salvation. The palace must shriek because no emperor will be head anymore of Christendom [as a body]. In the Emperor's absence, the ages will be confused. Otton's death is the great turning point in time. When he dies, death as general ruler invades the Christian culture. Otton's death has cosmic import. Heaven has changed its face and the earth its appearance. The wolves that devour the people is an image borrowed from the Germanic past. According to mythological lore, the wolves are the incarnated demons that break loose when the gods die, dooming the world to its destruction.

These are completely and utterly out-of-the-ordinary pronunciations at the death of an emperor. When Charlemagne died, even then, such things were not said. The poem again clearly points to the secret of Otton's III life. Intuitively, it was understood that Otton's death meant more than the death of an emperor. It was sensed that in his death a meta-historical event took shape. Only when a god dies is the cosmos moved, does death rule in a cultural realm. Then the connection between Heaven and Earth is broken, effecting the faces of heaven and earth to change their appearance.

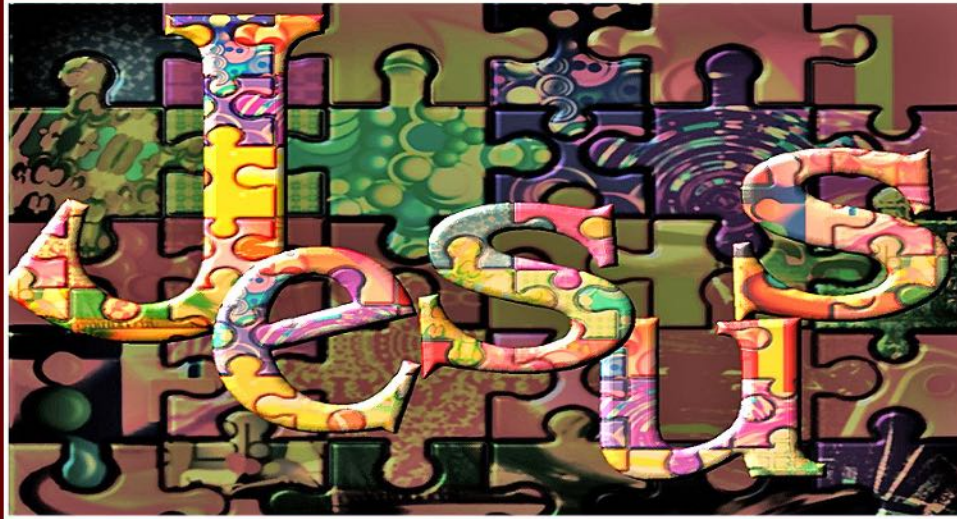


Dr. Frank de Graaff (19128-1993) was a Dutch reformed minister in Well & Ammerzoden, Apeldoorn, Rotterdam and Hattem. He wrote eleven books, the best known of which has become "When Gods Die, the Crisis of Western Culture" # 1969.

General Remark: Repeatedly, Frank de Graaff uses the phrase "unity of ecumenism" or "god of ecumenism". He also speaks of "the unity of all Christendom" and of "unity of the Christian civilization". There is nothing wrong with these last two concepts. With ecumenism, however, I have my doubts. At the very least, this word leads to misunderstandings. Ecumenism means "inhabited world" and used to refer to the Roman Empire. In the 18th century it was given the meaning of rapprochement between the churches, but only in the 20th century did it become a common term. The pursuit of unity according to Ephesians 4 is not contained in it! In the year 1000 there had not yet been any reformation and considerations about this did not play a role then. Therefore, Otton III could not have thought of anything resembling today's ecumenical movement, but he must have envisioned the unity of church and state. Therefore, instead of unity of ecumenism I prefer as a characterization for the Ottonian period the term "unity of the Christian Church and World" - a kind of Urbi et Orbi, and in other places I prefer instead of ecumenism the term church unification (in contrast to church division), and I choose for the god of ecumenism the term "the god of church unification and entente cordiale" (worldly agreement to what has been decreed). In one place I would leave ecumenism because it is undeniably used in the classical sense: *"Justice, righteousness, and mercy must reign throughout ecumenism."*



The Messiah-Monarch



The text explores prophecies concerning a future 'Messiah-Monarch', distinct from Jesus Christ, examining Jewish traditions of the coming of two Messiahs, one suffering and one glorious. It discusses the coming Reign of Peace and the restoration of Israel, revealing a Davidic lineage for this monarch, possibly through the 'hidden line' of Zerah. It analyzes biblical passages and rabbinic commentaries in support of the idea of a temporal ruler, who in spite of great obstacles will usher in the era of peace. In support of these contentions, historical perspectives and prophecies from Christian sources are referenced. Ultimately, the sources contemplate the identity and role of this future prince in establishing God's reign on earth, by contrasting and associating it with Jesus Christ's spiritual role, who will return, but not permanently so to sit then on an earthly throne.

15.72 – The Restoration of the Kingship

It is amazing that there is so little agreement about the new world order and the coming time of salvation. God's new world order is apparently a secret plan devised before the ages (1 Cor. 2:7), which does not stop us from speaking of it. The New Age movement speaks about this too, but from a state of mind that turns away from God. The 'new world order' is therefore a contaminated term, just like the millennium Adolf Hitler and his Nazis dreamed of. It all depends on what meaning you give it. God's plan goes through stages, also referred to as 'days' or 'ages'. According to undersigned, the universe does not come to its blissful final destination until the eighth day, also called the rest day of God's people (Heb. 4:8-10), with the eighth symbolizing the beginning of a new cycle. Just think of the structure of the musical octave. What the political-social constellation will look like in the eighth day has not yet been revealed. The Reign of Peace is now at hand, known as the seventh day, with each day representing a thousand years, starting with Adam. According to popular view, Christ was born at the end of the fourth day or the fourth millennium after Adam. That means that we are now living around the year Anno Mundi 6000.

The term millennium indicates that it will be a temporary empire. In that peaceful interlude, the Messiah-Monarch, also known as the Great Monarch, will sit on his throne. According to many Christians, that will be Jesus Christ Himself. But how can that be reconciled with the transience of that empire and the great turmoil at the end of it?

«« Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth - Gog and Magog - to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea. They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the Beast and the False Prophet are. »» (Rev. 20:7-10)

Two Messiahs?

Some are offended that a second messiah is being preached in addition to Jesus, because it would violate the gospel message. The Messiah-Monarch is quite different from the Messiah, Son of God. Jesus Christ is our advocate with the Father in whom we have access to the Heavenly Sanctuary. (Heb. 6:19-20 and Ch. 9) I would not dare say that about the Messiah-Monarch. Christ is the Greek translation of the Hebrew Messiah, also translated as the anointed one, a term also used in for the kings of Judeah, as in 1 Samuel 26 for King Saul. Josiah, one of the last kings of Judeah, was felled in the plains of Megiddo, over which great mourning took place. In Lamentations it says about this event: *"The breath of our nostrils, the Lord Messiah, was taken in their pits, of whom we said: under his shadow we shall live among the nations."* The Lord Messiah, above, is the literal translation from Hebrew, but commonly, to prevent misunderstandings, it states: *"Anointed of the Lord"*. This text is sometimes projected onto another anointed one, on Adam, the first man. Jesus is seen as the second Adam or second man (Adam also means human), according to 1 Corinthians 15:22, 45: *"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. (...) And so it is written: The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a life giving spirit."*

The messiah prince of the seventh day will be a human being, but anything but an ordinary human being, as the title implies. Because the Jews do not believe in the God-man Jesus, they must live in the expectation of a future prince who will distinguish himself from Him, the God-man. And that does not necessarily have to be a wrong position. From the promise that the Messiah comes from Israel, it is only logical that this prince, like Jesus, is descended from Abraham. The question this article focuses on is which papers of faith this monarch will be able to produce.

Jewish tradition expresses the belief in the coming of two Messiahs. The first would be son of Joseph, known as the suffering servant. In Sukka (51B, 52A, 53A) two Messiahs are mentioned in the order the Christians are familiar with: the suffering Messiah and the glorious one under his sign (the Cross). Great mourning is required, says the Talmud, because of the killing of the first Messiah, son of Joseph. He would be the predecessor of the good one, son of David. The Jews recognise in the suffering one whom the prophet Zechariah describes as *"the mourning for him who was pierced"*. Sukka refers to the suffering messiah when it speaks about the mourning for the only son, the pierced one. In this text the appearance is so bad that he looks like the embodiment of the evil inclination (yetzer ha-ra). This is right, for Isaiah 52:14 says of him: *"So marred was his visage unlike that of any man and his form unlike that of the sons of men."*

During the Millennial Reign of Peace, Israel will have become the leading nation, not out of their own merit but out of God's will, because God always keeps his promises. This was emphasized during Mary's hymn, when she was pregnant: "*God has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy – as He spoke to our fathers – to Abraham and to his seed forever.*" (Luke 1:54-55) Clearly, with the restoration of Israel's kingship, Israel's place in the world will have changed. She will then have become qualitate qua the leader people. The apostles could not have imagined that two more 'days' of galuth (exile) would come first, for after six weeks of instruction by the master Himself, they asked, knowing that Jesus would immediately ascend into heaven: "*Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?*" (Acts 1:6-9) This already indicates that the disciples knew that the Messiah-Monarch is different from Jesus Himself. After all, Jesus ascended into heaven and so He Himself could not be the sitting prince. Now, on the third day (third millennium), there is a restoration of the land and its people as the surest forerunner of the restored kingship!

A confrontation with the more eloquent Jews

During the 9th century reign of Charles the Bald - Holy Roman Emperor and King of West Francia - the Bishop of Amulo denounced the Jewish creed as "*superstition*". He incited all Christians to their duty in eradicating the error from the minds of the Jews, to force them to accept the Gospel in place of their belief in the two Messiahs, one a descendant of David and the other a descendant of Joseph. It is remarkable that in these documents the bishop complains that the Jews, by their eloquent sermons and lectures, made more impression on their hearers than did the preaching of the Christians, as he was convinced by personal experience. And, indeed, in this he was not mistaken; for where the Jews' lot was ameliorated, as in the reign of Louis the Saint — who, as well as his wife, Judith, honored the Jews, so much so as to change for their sake the fair-day from Saturday to Sunday — many Christians came to the synagogues to hear the Rabbis and the scholars among them read with pleasure the writings of Philo and Flavius instead of the Gospel, and likewise learned from Jewish scholars the interpretation of Scripture, as Rhabanus Maurus of Fulda avows in his commentary on the Bible.

"The Babylonian Talmud" translated by Michael Rodkinson:
Religious Disputes, Vol. 1, Book 10

15.73 – The Last One will be the First

"Let Thy Kingdom come" is one of the most remarkable prayers. It is for the fulfillment of God's kingdom on earth, for the establishment of the Reign of Peace, when the swords will have been beaten into plowshares. But there is no kingdom without a king! The Lord, king of kings, shall appoint that king, who will have come from a blessed line, an elected line that can be traced back via the ancestry. The Bible has many genealogical lists and with reason! But there is one genealogical line that is missing, that of the line of Zerach, which is only mentioned at the beginning. (Mt. 1:3) He did receive the birth-right! The other line from his twin brother Peres is that of Jesus. The hidden lineage of Zerach's progeny holds the key to the mystery of the true identity of the Prince of Peace.

The twins Zerah and Perez, born from the patriarch Judah, lay claim on a royal lineage. Except for his birth we hear nothing more of Zerah, who was given the blessing of the firstborn because he was the first to extend his little fist (from the womb). Yet, imme-

diately afterwards, he retracts his little hand, but not before a scarlet thread had been put around the little wrist as a sign of recognition. The hand went back into the birth canal, which would be a physiological impossibility for the body: *"But it came about as he drew back his hand, that behold, his brother came out. Then his mother said: 'What a breach you have made for yourself!' So he was named Perez. Afterward his brother came out who had the scarlet thread on his hand; and he was named Zerah."* (Gen. 38:29-30) Zerah bursts the womb but then hides in it, which is the perfect image of his line of descendance. Perez, who did not break the womb, breaks out first with his body to become the ancestor of the kings of the tribe of Judah, starting with David, nearly seven hundred years later. Perez, whose name also means breaker, represents the Messiah in his first coming. He breaks open the way into the Kingdom of Heaven. In the Midrash Rabbah, Tamar names him Perez to indicate that the Messiah-King, 'the Breaker', would one day come forth from him. (Gen. Rabbah 85:14)

Zerah, whose name means dawning, represents the Messiah in his second coming. Before the final redemption could dawn, Jesus Messiah had to set the preconditions. Zerah, the first, will become the last king of Israel and its most glorious one. The great redemption of the messianic age is spoken of in the prophets as the dawning, according to Isaiah 60:1-3:

«« Arise, shine: for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen (zarach) upon you. For behold, darkness will cover the earth and deep darkness the peoples, but the Lord will rise upon you and his glory will appear upon you. Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising (zarach). »»



If the Prince of Peace is of Zerachitic descent, why in prophecies is he called Son of David, who is from the Perez line? That is because he will be entirely clothed with Christ. Because of this clothing by the One who is the outstanding example of the Son of David,

the line of blood has become secondary. Not that it doesn't matter anymore, because both lines are closely related. Remember, they are twins. Moreover, they may have mixed again at a later point in history, which is beyond our scope for the time being.



The Great Monarch

That there is question of two different persons, and not of one with two functions, appears from the prophecies of Jeremiah and the Psalms. Jeremiah 23:5-8 reads: *“Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, that I will raise unto David a Branch of righteousness. A King shall reign and prosper, and execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will dwell safely. Now this is his name by which he will be called: the Lord our Righteousness.”* The Zerachitic king granted by God is rightly called a Branch raised to David, which agrees with the promise of Jeremiah in verses 23:5 and 33:15. I like to point out that there is no mention here of a branch raised ‘from’ (the root of) David, but *“I (God) will raise a branch ‘to’ David”*. It literally says in Hebrew, sprout erected in behalf of David. This man is also called *“the Branch of the Lord”* in Isaiah 4:2 and *“My Servant, the Branch”* in Zechariah 3:8, or just *“the Branch”* according

to Zechariah 6:12. These texts are normally understood as pertaining to our Lord Jesus Christ which seems right, for the man who is entirely clothed with Christ and Christ Himself, are acting in all their endeavours with One mind as happens with identical twins, because the one being clothed with Christ will have become the perfect servant. In this way, the last born will have become the first.

Why are these prophecies so difficult to understand? God hides his intentions not only for us, but also for his adversary. He also protects the Zerachitic descendants against assaults by putting them under a cloak of secrecy. The secrecy surrounding the Zerachitic descentance has to do with the conspiracy through the ages against the divinely ordained kingship, after the famous Psalm 2: *“The rulers of the earth set themselves and they take counsel together against the Lord ‘and’ his Anointed, saying: Let us break ‘their’ bonds in pieces and cast away ‘their’ cords from us.”* In these verses the Lord and his Anointed are two distinct persons.

Professor Pinchas Lapide (1922-1997), the renowned Jewish New Testament scholar and expert of the Holy Scriptures – during a radio program for the Bayerische Rundfunk (Southern Germany), on December 24, 1987 – looked into the political dimension of the great Monarch, known in Jewish tradition as the Son of David: ¹⁰³⁾

«« The Pharisees’ ‘Son of David’ implies a complete political program. He must be a ‘salvation politician’ like David, thus fulfilling the promises made to David

¹⁰³⁾ “Het bezit van de waarheid: het einde van de dialoog” (Possession of the truth: The end of the dialogue) by Pinchas Lapide - Ten Have, Baarn, Netherlands # 1989 (p. 99).

that his lineage, his dynasty, would occupy the throne of Israel forever. But like David, he must also be a warrior and, like David, overcome his enemies. »»

It is not just a political program, but a complete religious program too! The conclusion is unavoidable that the Apostle Peter joins Christ at his Return to serve as the officiating high priest, or pope, in the Reign of Peace, to rule the nations together with the Messiah-Monarch in unity-sweetness to rule the nations. This is also the time when the other apostles will rule the earth as royal priests. (Mt. 19:28)

Finally, I would like to point out the prophecy of Saint Francis of Paule (1416-1507), who was the confessor of King Louis XI. His forecasts are contained in his letters to Simon of Liména, Lord of Montalte: ¹⁰⁴⁾

«« There will be only one great pope and one great monarch left in the entire universe. The monarch's empire will last until the end of time. Then there will be only twelve kings, one emperor and one pope, and a small number of princes, and all will be saints. The monarch will be the great founder of a new religious order, distinguished from all others and which, being subdivided into three [the military knighthood, the religious priests and the hospitaliers], and this one will best serve the Church while she also will be the very last. Thanks to their assistance, the king will completely destroy the sect of Muhammad, eradicate all heretics put an end to all tyrannies, and take by force of arms a great kingdom [the kingdom of the East], so that there will be only one flock and one shepherd, and the whole world will be brought to the holy way of life. »»

That after Christ's return that still battles have to be waged against the armies of Islam is also consistent with the visions of Marie-Julie Jahenny (1850-1941), in which she describes how in the most miraculous way their armies are constantly defeated. It is obvious that God wants to give them the opportunity to repent in this particular way, for God takes into account that their upbringing makes it extremely difficult for many of them to submit to Jesus in the normal manner.



¹⁰⁴⁾ “Demain...?, d’après les Concordances frappantes de 132 Prophéties anciennes et modernes” (Tomorrow...?, exploring the striking similarities between 132 old and new prophecies), by Baron de Novaye - Édition Lethielleux, Paris # 1934 (p. 88).

15.74 – A Generation Tainted by Sorrow

Let us consider the battle at Ai, described in Joshua 7, which is the only place where the Bible mentions a descendant of Zerah. Joshua, leading the people of Israel into the Promised Land, first conquered Jericho. Then he goes on for the town of Ai. This conquest was not as easy as with Jericho. His men first took a severe beating and Joshua could not understand why. It was then found out that Achan, the son of Charmi, son of Zabdi, son of Zerah - the twin brother of Perez, had taken from the banned (herem). With Jericho despoliation had been expressly forbidden because the first spoils of the Promised Land were dedicated to God. As punishment, Achan of the house of Zerah is taken off to be stoned together with his whole family. The ban, not the punishment itself, is extended from the house of Achan to the house of Zerah. Up to this day the ban holds on the house of Zerah. It follows the rule that whoever takes from the banned and associates with the treasures of the enemy that were 'dedicated' to God, joins the people lost and is banished too. To be understood in the meaning of the Hebrew term herem, which is either a curse (bar-ak) because of a separation from God, or a blessing and an election (bar-ak again) because of a separation from the human community with the purpose of a consecration to God.

The Talmud teaches that the free confession of Achan was a victory over his evil inclination; the reward for his confession was that his soul was saved for the coming age while it was lost for the present age. (Sanh. 6:2) Now we can explain Joshua 7:25 as follows: "The Lord shall trouble thee this day, but thou wilt not be troubled in the age to come." The Bible passage itself reads: "*The Lord will trouble you 'this day'. So, all Israel stoned him with stones, and they burned Achan and his family with fire after they had been stoned. Then they raised over him a great heap of stones, still there to this day.*"

His herem should not be viewed as being doomed but as a consecration to God, "a separation in view of sanctification", a so-called kedushah in favour of the future generations humankind. Achan was buried in the valley of Achor, an extremely deep ravine. The Zerachites have sunk so deep that they have become a generation 'tainted in sorrow', completely lost out of sight. They are the lamed-waw, which is a typical Jewish expression to indicate such a thing. If these holy and suffering men did not exist, the Jewish lore teaches, the world would perish. The Talmud records that the world is sustained by the presence of at least 36 justified ones or saints. But nobody knows who they are! (Sanh. 97b, Sukka 45a) In Hebrew the letter lamed stands for 30 and waw for 6.

Let us consider the meaning of Achor, a word derived from aacher, which means trouble, difficulty, sorrow, pain, to hurt, to be attacked, and lastly: tainted generation. Tainted generation is a typical Hebrew expression and points at people who are 'blemished with the taint of sorrow', an image eloquently described in Psalm 88. I thus wonder if in the line of descendance of Zerah a connecting line is revealed of a tainted generation brought forth in sorrow and pain. Should we not say that this is a saintly line, the line of God's lamed-waw singled out to bring about liberation from the curse of expulsion that weighs on humankind? Just think about it, a sort of royal line, though not that of a literal kingship as the Frankish kings, but of a priestly service of reconciliation that cries for the restoration of God's theocracy; in the Lord's prayer we implore "*Thy kingdom come*". The lamed-waw stand in a line of descendance in opposition to the other line of cursed and evil councillors. Collectively the lamed-waw have contributed against the other collection while metaphorically lifting up the Cross of the Son. In this act of lifting they have raised the Lord - of all times - in his disfigured and suffering position to the heights of

the Almighty. These heights are set against the lowness of the deep ravine of Achor. In this raising up they reached the high place of refuge under the protection of the Almighty, which is offered to all foregoing generations who have lived in the mist of gloomy indetermination and loneliness. The Son will draw this line of God's lamed-waw forth from the valley of Achor with the multitudes who sojourn there, who are captured there up to the present day. (Rev. 6:9) When the Almighty stands revealed, eyes will be opened to those who have dwelt around Him. It will then appear that the Zerachites, who exalted the Son, have worked to the benefit of the Covenant and for the restoration of the kingdom under the enduring dynasty of the Sun-King. (Psalm 89:36-37) That is the implication of Achor.

15.75 – The Sceptre Promise

The promise holds that *“The scepter shall not depart from [the house of] Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh comes.”* (Gen. 49:10) These were Jacob's last words to his son Judah before he died. Shiloh is a place in the Ephraim or 10-tribe area at the north of Jerusalem. It was the religious center of the twelve tribes in the period of the Judges (14th-12th century before Christ). In a modern commentary on the Bible from the “Union for Reform Judaism”, the footnote explain concerning Genesis 49:10:¹⁰⁵⁾ *“One Jewish tradition, taking Jacob's blessing to be a prophecy for the end-time interpreted Shiloh to mean the Messiah, a new David who would come out of the house of Judah (...) If we abide by the Masoretic text it may be best to interpret: ‘Until Judah will come to worship at Shiloh’, that is UNTIL THE NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN KINGDOMS WILL BE REUNITED.”* Shiloh means the person sent out and is seen in this prophesy as the Messiah. We also recognize here the Viceroy, the Messiah-King, who according to this tradition will be ruling both kingdoms. It should be noted that the northern kingdom of the ten tribes has been lost since the Babylonian exile. But it has not disappeared or merged with the nations. If God lifts the banishment, they will no doubt be found again and thus find their final destination.

The sceptre handed over is the emblem of royal authority. The Christians say that the sceptre of Judah (the Jews) has had its day because Jesus has come already. This is partly true. Indeed, He has come as the suffering servant Son of Joseph, but we are still awaiting the glorious appearance of the Son of David when, finally, the Messiah-King will have vanquished everything and everyone.

Who Shiloh is and where he is, remains to this day unknown. The shiloic kingship is the fulfilment of Ezechiel 17:24: *“And all the trees of the field shall know that I, the Lord, will have brought down the high tree and exalted the low, dried up the green tree and made the dry tree flourish.”* Done what? Brought down the HIGH from the throne and exalted the LOW on the throne. These trees represent the descent of the royal branches of Israel. This means that God, in our time, has taken the crown off the Davidic or Perez line, and will place it upon the head of the Prince of Peace from the Zerachitic line. In the aftermath, the proverb is annulled concerning Israel (next three verses 18:1-3): *“The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge.”* Thus, now, in our present time we will witness the glorious revelation of Shiloh.

• Based in part on an unpublished 1986 manuscript by Jacqueline Wels.

105) “The Torah: A Modern Commentary” by W. Gunther Plaut and David E.S. Stein - Union for Reform Judaism # 2005.

The Time of God's Active Involvement

The Book of Revelation in the Light of the Old Testament



At the Helm, by Danny Hahlbohm (www.inspired-art.com)

God is not only a God of individuals, but of families too. Yes, God is a real family man. But here we are going to talk about how, in a recognizable way, God deals with nations. The drama of history is that during terrible events God did not intervene, or did not appear to intervene. Where was God during World War II when the Satanic powers prevailed and the Jewish people were led like cattle to slaughter? That question haunts many, and likewise many are haunted by the question of why God is now watching patiently at the abortion hecatombe. I will not try to answer that. It fits in with the exclamation of Psalm 94: "How long, Lord, how long may the wicked, the wicked, how long triumph, boast in themselves and speak insolent things?" In this article I'll focus on the circumstances under which God does visibly intervene. I do not feel entitled to explain why God averts his gaze under certain circumstances, which is all too common. In Hebrew this is called the 'hester panim': God hiding his face. If someone has never experienced the utmost despair, he must remain silent and not try to answer. That's why I'm silent. I do think that God's 'concealment' during certain catastrophes was not self-evident even to God Himself, and even that this caused Him great sorrow.

16.76 – The Day of the Lord

God's (apparent) inertia has led some to conclude that God never intervenes in world affairs because - so the reasoning goes - it is up to us to do and then God will bless our endeavours. Sounds pious, but this denies the reality of God's intervention during Israel's flight from Egypt and their long and adventurous wanderings afterward, which ended in their miraculous conquest of the Promised Land. In an unbroken series these are testimonies of God's active involvement. These are not just any stories, and this is equally true for what we learn in the testimony of John, when he is a witness in the spirit, while

on the island of Patmos, of “*the battle of the great day of the Almighty God*” (Rev. 16:4, see also 2 Pet. 3:12), which means the same as the Day of the Lord.¹⁰⁶ The ‘Day of the Lord’ stands for God’s active involvement and is first used by the two contemporaries Amos and Isaiah and later, in particular, by the prophets Joel and Zephaniah and of course also with Malachi in chapter 3. In Isaiah we find the expression in 2:12, 13: 6, 9 and 34: 8, and dozens of times it is simply called “*that day*”. We find the same approach with Amos. Joel and Zephaniah, however, mainly use the expression of ‘the Day of the Lord’.

While the flight from Egypt points to the past, the Book of Revelation points to the future. God’s punishments may be conditional, and so may God’s blessings, but as regards the predetermined times by God, those are unshakable. (Acts 17:26) Throughout the millennia, the divine schedule has been fixed with, at each turning point, no more than a few years earlier or a few years delay. While the Exodus points to the journey towards the Promised Land, the other points to the journey towards the Reign of Peace. While the one points to a single people God had chosen to be his own among all the peoples of the earth, the other points to all the peoples of the earth that God will chose to be his own among all the selfconscious humanoids of the Universe. After all, according to Hebrews 1:2, the Son is the appointed heir of everything. The hierarchy remains: first Israel, then the nations of our planet called World, first the land promise (now called Israel), and then the world promise under Christ’s kingship, that will give shape to Christ’s kingship over the whole Universe. (Ps. 2:8, Rev. 11:15)

Revelations are Foundation Rocks of the Holy Church

Supernatural visions and revelations are foundation rocks upon which the Church was established and upon which it stands. The whole Bible, Old and New Testament, is a supernatural revelation from God. (...) The New Testament, likewise, claims to be a ‘superhuman’ revelation. Paul said of the Gospel he preached: “*Neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through ‘revelation’ of Jesus Christ.*” (Gal. 1:12) What he wrote in all his epistles was simply a part of this supernatural ‘revelation of Jesus Christ’. Without such working of the Holy Spirit and without such visions and revelations (as were given Adullam) there would be no [true] Christianity at all. The true Church, begun in this manner, [continues to] exists to the present day because just such supernatural manifestations formed the cradle in which it was born and nursed into vigorous life.

“Visions beyond the Veil” by Harold Armstrong Baker (p.6).
Baker served as a missionary in Yunnan, China, between the two world wars.

Hebrews 1:2 refers to God’s intervention: “*But at the end of these days He has spoken to us in his Son, whom He appointed heir of all, through whom He created **the universe / ages.***” Nearly all versions translate the Greek ‘ayon’ in this verse with only ‘world’ instead of the all-encompassing ‘universe’ or ‘ages’, while ‘ayon’ is there in plural form and the Greek ‘cosmos’ is a better word for the usual ‘world’. Ayon appears a number of times in the New Testament, such as in Ephesians 2:6-7, where it is translated ‘centuries’ (so in the limited sense), but ‘ages’ is also correct: “*God raised us up together with Christ, and made us sit together in the Heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.*”

106) In Acts 2:20, 1 Thessalonians 5: 2, 2 Peter 3:10, the term ‘hemera kurios’ is used for ‘the Day of the Lord’, in which God intervenes in world affairs. Revelation 1:10 deviates from this with the Greek term ‘en teh kuriakeh hemera’, which is the day in the weekly observance of the early Christians that was especially devoted to the Lord and from which the Sunday observance was finally derived.

This verse ties in with the theme of God's creative and active involvement. Just as an important episode ended two thousand years ago, an important episode (or age) will come to an end in the run-up to the Reign of Peace. Just as God's active involvement was shown during the public life of Jesus Christ, but especially during his atoning sacrifice, which indeed has a universal meaning, so upon the approach of the Kingdom of Peace, God will come into action too – with, as always, far-reaching consequences.

16.77 – Lift up your Heads

God's active involvement is not, as the term suggests, only judgment, but it is also salvation, for says Psalm 76:8: *"When God arose to judgment, to deliver all the oppressed of the earth."* Psalms 75 and 76 are pre-eminently those that point to God's active involvement. Says Psalm 75:2: *"When I choose 'the proper time', I will judge uprightly."* That time was not during the Second World War and not during the abortion plague. Or should I say 'not yet' regarding the latter? As the great 19th century preacher Charles Spurgeon commented on this verse (Treasury of David): *"He determines the period of interposition, and when that arrives, swift are his blows and sure are his deliverances."* And a little further: *"The boastful power (...) will be humbled (...) and roll their glory in the mire for ever"* And also: *"The foolish dream that God is not, ...but He 'is', near even now. (...) Even now He is actually judging. (...) The punishment of the wicked is prepared; God Himself holds it in readiness."* And his commentary on Psalm 76:6: reads thus: *"God of the struggling Israelites, who, like their forefathers, are again pushing out their enemy. The God of the covenant and the promise, You have fought in this gracious capacity for your chosen people."* And thereafter: *"Let men and devils rage as they may, they cannot do otherwise than subserve the divine purposes."*

As we study Biblical history of the Jewish people, as we study Christ's life, it appears that God's direct involvement in world affairs is always related to something great, the point of entering into a glorious period with each subsequent period lifted on a higher plane, until the fulness of times has been reached, and every knee in heaven, on the earth, and under the earth, will bow and every tongue will confess that Christ is Lord. (Phil. 2:10) Therefore, when the Evangelist Luke speaks of the wars, persecution of the faithful and natural disasters that our world will experience, he writes: *"Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near!"* (Luke 21:28) To this I add: knowing that God directs everything from his great Mercy with only one immediate goal in mind: the salvation of souls. That is why Joel says after describing the fearful day of the Lord:

«« Now, therefore - says the Lord - turn to Me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping and with mourning. So rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, of great kindness and relents from doing harm. Who knows if He will turn and relent and leave a blessing behind Him. »»

The choice is ours - for or against God - and that freedom of choice remains unaffected. God never compels. If it is not from faith, people will come to accept God from the devastating circumstances that they themselves have provoked. And then the good will suffer from the bad. In a message given to Mary Divine Mercy on April 15, 2013, Jesus says: *"Once they realise the horror being created – because the Light of God will have been extinguished and in its place there will have come darkness, emptiness, hunger and lack of love – only then will Man cry out for God's Mercy. I will be there, waiting to give them comfort and salvage their poor frightened souls."*

And finally comes the terrifying judgment, the total casting away of the wrongdoers. But there is comfort from the hopeful and comforting assurance that one day the entire

creation, from the highest to the lowest sphere, will be freed from its endless tribulation and its countless calamities and be relieved of its burden, so as to gain the freedom and glory of the children of God. Does not the Prophet Daniel say: *"There is to be a (blessed) kingdom which the God of heaven shall set up, which shall never be destroyed. (...) But it shall break asunder and consume all these (evil) kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."* (Dan. 2:44)

God is Known by his Judgments

Why is [the Great] Judgment unavoidable? Know that the very last work of God is Judgment, after which He has no need to do anything else. On the seventh day God rested, for the work of creation was finished. After Judgment, the tabernacle of God, we are told, shall dwell among men forever. (Rev. 21:3 ff.) Whereas the work of creation does not prevent that sin will ever enter, Judgment guarantees that sin will be gone forever. While the work of creation fails to prevent the world from rebelling, Judgment makes certain that thereafter rebellion will be no more.

"The Spirit of Judgment" by Watchman Nee - Christian Fellowship # 1984 (Part 1.1).

16.78 – The Place of the Book of Revelation

The Book of Revelation consists of allegorical images, the exact meaning of which is revealed under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Since all the different Bible books share the same divine author, they should not be read as separate works but as a whole, despite the fact that they were written down by writers who often had little in common in terms of time, place, and culture. Thus, for the study of Revelation, we may as well turn to the Old Testament apocalyptic literature, and that is done here. Due to the difficulty of Revelation, there are voices arguing that the rendering is purely a 'figment of the mind' and merely illustrates the relentless struggle between good and evil that will one day - in a nonexistent future - end in God's avenging justice (nemesis). This strips the message of its sacredness and prophetic meaning. As if God speaks empty words! Of course, the content is terrifying and we rather prefer not to think about it. But whether that is wise, is debatable, as right in our time it might be that the foretold day of darkness and gloominess comes, a day of clouds and thick smoke! (Zeph. 1:15) There is a feeling, even more so, that that day is near. Says Franklin ter Horst in his newsletter:

«« The Bible tells how humankind can discover from a number of specific signs that the end of the present age is drawing near. Towards judgment! All indications are that those signs are realizing themselves right now! As of present there is an ideal breeding ground for chaos, collapse, and war. Soon it will all collapse, in God's appointed time, like a house of cards. That will be the final downfall of the conspiring elite! »» (Uit het Nieuws/From the News, 7-4-2013)

16.79 – God does not 'fight' Man

As for God's revenge - but is revenge the right term? - we can turn to Jeremiah 46, which ends with a word of comfort for Israel. Or we can read Isaiah chapters 24 through 26, with words of comfort being uttered after judgment, this time to Judah. In the last two verses, the whole thing is compared to a woman in the throes of labor. She is suffering, but is expecting something beautiful. God is not just out for revenge, but for 'creation'. After the announcement of the terrible judgment, Isaiah chapters 34 and 35 end with words of comfort, this time for Israel. See 35:4: *"Say to those with fearful hearts: Be strong, do not fear. Your God will come, He will come with vengeance, with divine retribution [against all the arrogant and proud of heart, against all who exalt in boastfulness -*

cf. Is. 2:12], but you, yes you, He will come to save.” In verse 6, which paints a beautiful picture of the messianic reign, I find thirteen references to the New Testament: “Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy. Water will gush forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert.”

God loves all of His children and has shed his Blood for each individual. The word child says it all. So why would God seek revenge? As God will deliver Israel, He will deliver His adopted children, I mean the Christians out of the nations. If vengeance is involved, it is against God’s real enemy, not Man, but against Lucifer and his acolytes, including the ruling elites, those who have forged a common cause with the devil. The elites say to themselves: “I am a god and what I say happens”, while they are merely human, a pile of dust. (Ez. 28:2)

In Isaiah 13 and 14 we see another cycle of God’s active involvement, followed again by the broad perspective. Then it becomes clear who works behind the scenes, who is God’s real enemy. After all, our fight, siding God’s, is not against people of flesh and blood, but against the heavenly princes and rulers of darkness. (Eph. 6:12) The Prophet Isaiah hits the nail on the head: (Is. 14:12-19)

«« How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: “*I will ascend into Heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. I will also sit on the mount of the congregation. On the farthest sides of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds. I will be like the Most High.*”

No! You shall be brought down to the abode of the dead (Sheol), to the lowest depths of the Pit. Those who see you will gaze at you and consider you, saying: “*Is this the man who made the earth tremble, who shook kingdoms? Who made the world as a wilderness and destroyed its cities - who did not open the house of his prisoners?*” All the kings of the nations, all of them, sleep in glory, everyone in his own house. But you are cast out of your grave like an abominable branch, like the garment of those who are slain, thrust through with a sword, who go down into the Pit and are buried with stones. You are like a corpse trodden underfoot. »»

That ties in with Isaiah 27:1: “*In that day the Lord with his severe sword, great and strong, will slay Leviathan the fleeing serpent, Leviathan that twisted serpent, the monster that is in the sea.*” See also Isaiah 24:21-22: “*It shall come to pass in that day that the Lord will punish on high the host of exalted ones (demonic powers), and on the earth the kings of the earth. They will be gathered together as prisoners, gathered in the Pit, shut up in the prison.*”

May that provide the certainty that for us humans God’s mercies will never be exhausted. Don’t forget to pray for the wrongdoers. May God break open their hardened hearts and reveal to them his Love, because for every crime, no matter how terrible, there is forgiveness, provided they are still in the land of the living. In fact, devils are working through people and blocking them from coming to the knowledge of the truth. Only God can lift that blockage, but He asks for our prayer to do so.



Prayer to Attenuate God's Judgment

The seer Vassula Ryden gave us a prayer, given to her on November 28, 2009, to temper God's Judgment:

Tender Father, lash not your wrath on this generation, lest they perish altogether.

Lash not on your flock distress and anguish, for the waters will run dry and nature will wither.

All will succumb at your wrath leaving no trace behind them.

The heat of your Breath will put aflame the earth turning it into a waste!

From the horizon a star will be seen.

The night will be ravaged and ashes will fall as snow in winter, covering your people like ghosts.

*Take Mercy on us, God, and do not assess us harshly.
Remember the hearts that rejoice in You and You in them!*

Remember your faithful and let not your Hand fall on us with force, but rather in your Mercy lift us and place your precepts in every heart.

Amen.

APOCALYPSE NOW!!

Calendar of Joy or Calendar of Mourning?



This contribution examines the Book of Revelation, exploring the idea that the depicted ‘apocalypse’, or revelation, is not solely about destruction but ultimately about a liberation under God’s reign on Earth. It discusses a cyclical pattern of mourning and joy, mirrored in harvest seasons and Jewish traditions, implicating that divine judgment can be reversed through repentance, as proven by examples from the Old Testament prophets Jeremiah and Manasseh. Ultimately, while acknowledging the dire predictions, the text posits that repentance can transform curses into blessings, making supplication for such a reversal a meaningful act.

17.80 – The things that have to be done

The word ‘apocalypse’ calls up scenes of death and destruction in which God pours out bowls of tribulation. I was somewhat surprised when I first learned that ‘apocalypse’ is simply a Greek word for ‘revelation’.¹⁰⁷⁾ It appears for the first time in the Bible in the Book of Revelation: “***The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show his servants – things which must shortly take place***”. Major events are referred to here, for then the text goes on to say that they who hear and take it all to heart will be blessed. But that is not the finale, for those who have been liberated sing: “*And we shall reign on earth.*” (Rev. 5:9-10) And also - three verses further on - but now in chorus with all creatures: “*Blessing and honor and glory and power be to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb forever and ever.*” At the end of the book the holy city of Jerusalem comes down to earth out of God’s heaven. (Rev. 21:10) It comes ‘out of’ God’s heaven. But where does it land? Where else than on (the new) earth! With the announcement of

107) The misconceptions regarding the meaning of the word ‘apocalypse’ are encouraged by the great deal of attention paid by readers of the Book of Revelation for the catastrophes described in that book, with books and films referring to the theme playing on the misunderstanding. A film of this type is called: “Apocalypse then: A second look at the first Gulf War”.

the final plagues the victors over the beast sing first the hymn of Moses, God's servant, which is also the hymn of the Lamb: *"Great and marvelous are Your works, Lord God almighty! Just and true are your ways, O King of the saints! Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For you alone are holy, for all nations shall come and worship before You. For Your judgments have been manifested."* (Rev. 15:3-4, Deut. 32:1-52) The book closes with the following words (Rev. 22:16): *"I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star. And the Spirit and the bride say: Come! And let him who hears say: Come! And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the waters of life freely."*

It would be extremely fatalistic to dare to state that all the bowls of tribulation and so many more terrible events are the things *"that must come to pass"*, with the emphasis on 'must'. Although the text allows this, another interpretation is possible, one that is not so obvious. The final goal of the Apocalypse is fixed: that God's liberated ones, from every family and language and people and nation will reign as kings on earth. This 'must' and 'shall' happen. There is no disputing the fact, and it will be thanks to the *"golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints"*. (Rev. 5:8) And thus not all the bowls are filled with tribulations. Hallelujah. Praised be the Lamb!

17.81 – Harvest Cycle of Mourning, a Mirror-Image of that of Joy

A remarkable aspect of the cycle of occurrences in the book of Revelation is the way in which it regularly refers to a 'harvest'. Rev. 6:6 speaks of *"A quart of wheat for a denarius ad three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not harm the oil and the wine"*. In verse 13 we find mention of the fig tree that rejects its unripe fruits. In verse 4 of the ninth chapter is the following: *"They were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing or any tree."* In Chapter 14 from verse 14 onwards writes in terms of the grain and wine harvest, ending with the winepress being trampled, something that always occurs at the end of the season, this as a prelude to the seven final plagues. In chapter 19, where the victory of Christ over the false prophet is proclaimed, the winepress is once again trampled (verse 15).

Israel's cycle of feasts accentuates the important events of the harvest season – happy occasions. But here there is no thought of a cycle of joy but a cycle of mourning! The remarkable thing is that when all this is over and the tears have been wiped from the eyes and pestilential death has been conquered (Rev. 21:4) – an interpretation that matches up with the meaning of the Hebrew word 'mut' or 'death' – at that stage the harvest cycle will have turned into something quite different. Even then people will die (who are then born), not of illness but tired of years. (Isa. 65:20-22) That is the third death. The lake of fire, meant for the god-haters, is the second death. (Rev. 20:14; 21:8) Indeed, since everything is new. The tree of life (Rev. 22:3) will produce fruits every month. But all of this happens in a future which, at present, does not need to concern us, except for the fact that it helps keep our hopes alive that everything will come right.

In order to obtain a better understanding of the harvest cycle of mourning, we can turn to Moses' last speech at the gates of the Promised Land. (Deut. 27-33)¹⁰⁸⁾ Here Moses

108) In Exodus 15 Moses and the people of Israel join together in a song of praise for God's victory because of their passage through the Red Sea, a song referred to in Revelation 15:3-4. The ten plagues of Egypt and the beginning of Exodus are a source of exciting comparisons with the Book of Revelation. And there is also David's hymn of praise in II Samuel 22 that matches up wonderfully well with the material.

presents the blessing and the curse as two extremes in the same spectrum. He closes his speech (after which he transfers command to Joshua) with the following words: *“I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing, therefore choose life.”* (Deut. 30:19) What is that blessing exactly? The Lord will make you overflow with all that is good, in the fruit of your loins, in the fruit of your cattle and in the fruit of your land; on the land that the Lord swore to your fathers He would give to you. The Lord will open the rich treasury of heaven for you in order to give your land rain at the appropriate time and to bless all the works of your hands. (Deut. 28: 1-14) In the curse we find the mirror-image in more or less the same words, but much more detailed (verses 15 to 68): *“The Lord will strike you with consumption, with fever, with inflammation, with severe burning fever, with the sword, with scorching and with mildew (...) And your heavens which are over your head shall be bronze, and the earth which is under you shall be iron. The Lord will change the rain of your land to powder and dust (...) You shall carry much seed out to the field but gather little in.”*

The text describes further dark disasters... You will plant vineyards yet drink no wine. You will have olive trees but will be unable to anoint yourselves. Pests will overtake all your orchards and the fruit of your land. And so it goes on with bilious curses. No wonder that these verses have gained little popularity in Judaism. The harvest calendar of joy is mirrored in one of mourning, something that continually comes into the foreground when God's people leaves the right path. Then the abundant blessings of the other calendar are cut short with judgment as the logical consequence. On the other hand we may say that the harvest calendar of mourning is mirrored in one of joy, something that comes to the fore every time when God's people is on the right path or turns from its devious ways.

We recognise this pattern in the New Year's festivities in the month of Tishrei that end in the great Day of Reconciliation or Yom Kippur on the tenth of the month. Typically, New Year's Day is also known as the Day of Judgment. The first and tenth days of this month developed into official days of repentance and in the course of time came to be known in the synagogue as the 'Yamim Nora'im', the fearful and terrible days with, in between, an interlude of peace. How can it then be that the Great Day of reconciliation in Judaism is preceded by fear and feelings of doom – fear that the plagues of Egypt, or worse, will strike the people of Israel? The explanation is to be found in the mirror-imaged alternative within God's plan of creation. The choice is ours. A similar kind of sombre reflection also applies to the weeks leading up to Whitsun (Shavuot), which are spent in semi-mourning. The Jewish wise ones do not actually know precisely why. Coincidentally it would seem that Shavuot is also the exact day on which the beginning of the handing over, from Heaven, of the Horeb laws and prescriptions occurred, which was cloaked in darkness, thunder and smoke. And thus it is here that the start of the covenant saga is commemorated, with all its blessings and curses. If the mourning calendar is in force, it can turn into a festive calendar provided that the requirements of penance and repentance are fulfilled. The festive calendar and that of mourning both turn out to be conditional but not exactly one another's mirror-image, for the Lord is slow to anger and quick to forgive. And, as already pointed out, the Magna Carta of this historical pattern is laid out in the last speech of Moses before the people's entry into the Promised Land. Every judgment can turn into an anti-climax, and that is what in the end will happen, not just for the people of Israel but also for the whole world. Their blessing will turn out to be everyone's blessing – and ours too! ¹⁰⁹⁾

109) The end of Tishrei 1 might agree with Matthew 24:30 and Tishrei 10 with 2 Thessalonians 2:8. The day of completion of the harvest cycle on Tishrei 22 might agree with Matthew 25:31.

17.82 – Call to Repentance

That the punishments, announced by God, are conditional, is found in the writings of Jeremiah who announced shortly before Judah went into Babylonian exile: (Jer. 18:7-11)

«« The instant I speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, to pull down and to destroy it, if that nation against whom I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent of the disaster that I thought to bring upon it. And the instant I speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it, if it does evil in my sight so that it does not obey my voice, then I will relent concerning the good with which I said I would benefit it. Now therefore, speak to the men of Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem: *“Thus says the Lord: I am fashioning a disaster and devising a plan against you. Return now every one from his evil way, and make your ways and your doings good.”* »»

At a later stage the prophet speaks out against Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, who had done wrong in the eyes of God. In addition, the leaders of the priests and the people sinned more and more, practising the horrors committed by the nations, and they dishonoured the House of God that He had dedicated in Jerusalem. Zedekiah refused to humble himself before the Prophet Jeremiah, who spoke from God’s mouth (Jer. 38:17): *“If you surely surrender to the king of Babylon’s princes, then your soul shall live; this city shall not be burned with fire and you and your house shall live.”* Even at this advanced stage of loss of the true belief and in a state of misery, the merciful God, like a caring and loving mother, showed his people a way out of destruction. Judah had already endured great sufferings under two recent invasions, the last involving a major deportation of the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Nonetheless Zedekiah refused to humble himself. And so it happened that Israel was rejected from God’s presence, yes, 19 years after the first invasion. Around that time the last small remnant of the people was torn away, thereby issuing in the start of the seventy years of exile.

A well-known example of a king who did listen to God’s call to repentance was Manasseh. It would be difficult to find a greater sinner than this man. In Kings and Chronicles it is written Manasseh misled his people to the point that they committed greater evils than the Canaanite peoples that God had driven away for the Israelites. (2 Kings 21; 2 Chron. 33) For he built up the sacred places on the mountains where his father had previously demolished them. He set up altars to the Baals in every part of the land. He offered his children up to Moloch ‘the King’ in the fires of the Tophet in the Valley of Hinnom. He put his own son through the fire, gave himself up to all kinds of wicked fortune-telling and magic and consulted exorcists and mediums. He even caused a carved image of Ahshera to be erected in the Temple of Jerusalem. It was only after he had been taken prisoner by Assurbanipal that he returned to God’s ways. So we read in 2 Chronicles 33:12-13: *“He humbled himself greatly before the Lord God of his fathers (...) (and God) brought him back to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the Lord was God.”*

17.83 – Prayer ‘not’ Useless

It is therefore possible that all the disasters foretold in the book of Revelation and there presented to us can change into the opposite if the world repents and turns to God. It is possible – but if it will happen is another question. If you want my personal opinion, I find it unrealistic to expect the world to come to its senses and turn away from its evil paths, thereby changing the calendar of mourning into the calendar of rejoicing and thus enabling us to change every curse of the Apocalypse into a blessing. God in His wisdom has chosen to write the book of Revelation in terms of the calendar of mourning. So

despite its conditional character, we would do well to take seriously into consideration the the events might happen as written. It does seem realistic to me to assume that within the worldwide scenario some countries will be an exception. For that reason a prayer for the conversion of the Netherlands must not be seen as a useless exercise, but to be just as useful as a prayer that the calamities should be lessened once they have come, even if the prayer is only for what happens in our immediate vicinity.



Is Belief in the Reign of Peace Optional ?



Belief in the Millennial Reign of Peace is seen by many as optional: “After all, it is about the salvation of your soul and that of your neighbor. The rest is a side issue. That empire has nothing to do with the experience of faith. When the Reign of Peace arrives, we will know...” This writer thinks differently, thinks that whether or not to believe in a real Kingdom of Peace is extremely important for our deposit of faith. It is certainly not an optional subject. The New Testament is laced with references to the Kingdom of Peace, often simply called the kingdom or the Kingdom of God, building on an abundant Old Testament tradition. If it was so important in Jesus’ day and in the years thereafter, why wouldn’t it be to us? The fact that we have now been waiting for two thousand years for its fulfillment should not be a reason to put the theme aside. Ancient Israel also had to wait an untold time for their messiah to arrive (two thousand years ago now), and the Jewish people still believe He must come, and they still are looking forward to it with ardent anticipation. The first Christians longed for Jesus’ return in glory, praying: “Come, Lord Jesus, come – Maranatha!” (Mar. 13:24-32, Rev. 22:20) Let that be our prayer too.

18.84 – The Personal Salvation goes Together with the Collective

Neglecting the theme of the Kingdom of Peace, or bluntly denying it, as if it were only on an allegorical stage, has to do with a characteristic feature of Christian theology in which the redemption of the individual is the beginning and the end of existence. From that perspective, the Old Testament is a sleep-inducing book.

The Old Testament is the book in which especially the nations are discussed, first of all the people of Israel. Only with the so-called pre-evangelist Ezekiel does this noticeably change. Chapter 18 of his book begins as follows: “*What do you mean when you use this*

proverb concerning the land of Israel: the fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge? As I live, says the Lord God, you shall no longer use this proverb in Israel. Behold, all souls are Mine. The soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is Mine. The soul who sins shall die." In other words, from now on each person will be personally responsible.

However, personal versus collective salvation is not a contradiction, not even a sequentiality, for it may be clear to everyone that the nations in the Reign of Peace only have the right to be there if the citizens within those nations are made of the good stuff, if they are mature believers clothed with Christ. It is a maturization process. The letter to the Romans does not say that we are now dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus, but that we must 'consider' ourselves as such. (Rom. 6:11) In verse 8 it says that we 'shall' live. The contemplation of that state is the goal to which we strive and which will one day be fully given to us in the Reign of Peace. Only then will the prediction of the Prophet Jeremiah be fulfilled that everyone will know their God under the then existing condition that God's law is written in everyone's heart – which is not the case today, even for the zealous Christian. Let me put it this way: I've never met someone like that.

The Dezionization of the Bible

In November 1938, shortly after Kristallnacht, plans were made for the establishment of the "Institut zur Erforschung und Beseitigung des jüdischen Einflusses auf das Deutsche kirchliche Leben" (to investigate and remove the Jewish influence on German ecclesiastical life). A group of German Christians convened a meeting exactly on the date on which Luther arrived at the Wartburg in 1521, to establish this Eisenacher Institute, building on a long tradition within the Christian communities, which was not unrelated to the persecution of the Jews through the ages. It is therefore not surprising, but regrettable nonetheless, that Professor Notger Slenczka of Humboldt University in Berlin suggested in an article of April 2015 that the Old Testament should no longer be regarded as canonical, but rather as belonging to the Apocrypha, that is, valuable books that speak to us from the cradle of our civilization, but absolutely not as the infallible Word of God. According to Slenczka, we can derive valuable insights from these writings without basing our belief on them. For Palestinian Christians, such as the Anglican Naim Ateek, the Lutheran Mitri Raheb and the Catholic Yohanna Katanacho, who published the controversial Kairos Palestinian Document in 2009, in which they rallied behind the 'suffering Palestinians' in the so-called 'occupied territories', the issue is, just as with the 'German Christians movement', about the erasing of the Jewish elements from the Bible. In the first instance it's about the dezionization of the Biblical message.

It may be clear that for this kind of people the Reign of Peace is only a metaphor. Does not Christ tell Pilate "*My kingdom is not of this world*"? However, that was at that particular moment in time and cannot be seen as absolute. How else could we look forward to the complete victory over evil and the restoration of the paradisiacal state? One day we will be delivered from original sin, which is in fact the inherited genetic burden of original sin.

Usually, Jewish tradition speaks of the Millennial Kingdom of Peace as the coming reign (olam haba), although the term Millennial Kingdom of Peace will not sound strange to them. The word olam for reign also means universe or mystery. From our worldly brokenness it is impossible to visualize the reality of the Reign of Peace or the Kingdom of Heaven clearly – the splendor of it escapes us completely, is hidden from us. The lion

will eat grass and the baby will put its hand into the hole of an asp and not be hurt. (Is. 11:6-9) That image is majestically drawn in the next prophecy of Isaiah:

«« For behold, I'll create new heavens and a new earth! And the former shall not be remembered or come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create. For behold, I create Jerusalem as a rejoicing, and her people a joy. I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and delight in my people. The voice of weeping shall no longer be heard in her, nor the voice of crying. The infant of a few days shall not die. The old man will not go unless he has fulfilled his days. For one dies in the prime of one's life even when one reaches a hundred years old, and whoever fails to reach a hundred years shall be accursed. They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. No, they shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat. For as the days of a tree, so shall be the days of my people, and my elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth children for trouble. For they shall be the descendants of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them. It shall come to pass that before they call, I will answer, and while they are still speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together. The lion shall eat straw like the ox. And dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, says the Lord! »» (Is. 65:17-25)

These are prosaic images that may be taken literally, but are nevertheless a weak shadow of what the world will soon look like. Nevertheless, our expectation remains an earthly expectation. Those who are scornful about it are guilty of super-spiritualization. As if God is only interested in our spiritual well-being. Jesus was taken up to heaven with both soul and body. He did eat fish after his resurrection, which is a very earthly thing.

The expression 'Kingdom of Heaven' is taken from the second chapter of the Book of Daniel. After foretelling that there should arise four empires, the last of which a reign of iron, he goes on to say:

«« And in the days of these kings shall the God of Heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, and that kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces, and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. (In another passage it states:) I saw in the night a vision, and behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given unto Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. »»

18.85 – The Consequences of Rejecting the Reign of Peace

The first consequence of an allegorical interpretation of the Reign of Peace is that it leads to a rejection of the Jewish people and their books. Justin Martyr, one of the second century Church Fathers, was categorical in condemning this interpretation:

«« For I choose to follow not men or men's doctrines, but God and the doctrines delivered by Him. For if you have fallen in with some, called Christians, but who do not admit this truth, and venture to blaspheme the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, who also say that there is no resurrection of the dead, and that their souls, when they die, are taken [for ever] to Heaven [to be together with the angels], do not imagine that they are Christians. (...) But I and others, who are right-minded Christians on all points, are assured that there will be

a resurrection of the dead, and a thousand years in Jerusalem, which will then be built, adorned, and enlarged, as the prophets Ezekiel and Isaiah and others declare. »» (Dialogue with Trypho, Ch. LXXX)

Interestingly, Justin speaks about blaspheming the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, which is a definition of antisemitism. Indeed, if there are no earthly promises then the Jewish people is a remnant of the past. Then I join the historian Arnold Toynbee who called Judaism an empty shell (he didn't even speak of a people!), and branded the Jew as a fossil of the Syrian civilization.

When there is talk of the New Paradise, it automatically evokes the memory of the first one. Ancient opinion locates the first Paradise where now lie the sunken cities of Sodom and Gomorrha, that is, the Dead Sea, into which the Jordan flows in and out, forming the eastern border of the present-day State of Israel. It should be noted that Gennesaret, a little more to the north, is derived from the Hebrew Gansar meaning 'garden of the prince', that is, of Adam, the prince of humankind. The Jewish commentator Flavius Josephus gives a nice description of it: (War of the Jews, Book 1:3, ch. 9 §8)

«« Its nature is wonderful as well as its beauty! Its soil is so fruitful that all sorts of trees can grow upon it, and the inhabitants accordingly plant all sorts of trees there. The temper of the air is so well mixed, that it agrees very well with those several sorts, particularly walnuts, which require the coldest air, flourish there in vast plenty. There are palm trees also, which grow best in hot air. Fig trees also and olives grow near them, which yet require an air that is more temperate. One may call this place the ambition of nature, where it forces those plants that are naturally enemies to one another to agree together. It is a happy contention of the seasons, as if every one of them laid claim to this country; for it not only nourishes different sorts of autumnal fruit beyond men's expectation, but preserves them a great while. It supplies men with the principal fruits, with grapes and figs continually, during ten months of the year and the rest of the fruits as they become ripe together through the whole year; for besides the good temperature of the air, it is also watered from a most fertile fountain »»

The second consequence of rejecting the reality of the Kingdom of Peace is that the run-up to it with all its horrors will not be recognized as the messenger of salvation. (Mt. 24:31) Moreover, the final judgment will not be taken seriously either, for both are in the Book of Revelation. As the introductory statement to the 1975 Catholic Willibrord Bible Translation in Dutch teaches, the Book of Revelation "*in spite of its often bizarre form, is not geared to sensation but rather to the encouragement and comfort of the pious minority persecuted by the official powers of the world.*" In short: we don't have to take this bizarre exposition seriously and foremost not literally!

The foregoing shows that by rejecting a real Kingdom of Peace, not only the Old Testament and 'its people' are a thing of the past, but also the Book of Revelation and the other prophecies in the New Testament that point to it. The Antichrist and the False Prophet fit into those excentric convictions and are therefore not taken seriously as well. And what about Jesus' resurrection from the dead and his deity? Is that an allegory too? When we set out on this path, anyone can take whatever he sees fit. I do know Christians who do not take the Kingdom of Peace literally and yet they are very good Christians. My argument is that this weakens the line of defense against heretical ideas. After all, the prophetic perspective disappears. It is overlooked that God's plan is unfolding throughout the ages in order to restore humanity and each individual to their original state. In summary, the Kingdom of Peace is the restoration of the paradisiacal state.

The Reign of Peace can only take shape in the larger context after it has also taken shape in each individual separately. (Mt. 6:33, 1 Tim. 4:8, Ps. 37:9) Anyone looking for God's Kingdom must first seek it within himself! Melker, the priest of the Synagogue of Bethlehem, wrote in his report to the Higher Sanhedrin on account of the strange events surrounding the birth of Jesus in his town:

«« We, as Jews, place too much confidence in the outward appearance. While the idea we get of the Kingdom of Heaven is all of a carnal nature, consisting of forms and ceremonies, the prophecies referred to, and many other passages that I could mention, all go to show that the Kingdom of God is to begin within us, in the inner life, and rule there, and from that inner nature all outward actions are to flow in conformity with the revealed and written teachings and commands of God. (...) The whole government [of the Kingdom of God] has to find its authority in the prophetic vision as set forth by the commands of God, meant to regulate human life commencing in the inner life and working outwardly, until the outward is like the inward, and thus advancing on from individuals to nations. The messianic prophecy has no other justification than this. On this rests the Church, and on this rests the theocracy. On this rests the glory of the future Kingdom of God upon earth. »»

18.86 – Papias and Irenæus about the Kingdom of God

Papias (60-163) is a Church Father who personally had met John the Baptist. He was a friend of St. Polycarp, the bishop of Smyrna, who was a noted disciple of John the Evangelist. His theology is therefore on the mark. In the following he paints a grandiose picture of the Reign of Peace, which he would not have done had he not believed a literal fulfillment of the Reign of Peace: ¹¹⁰⁾

«« When the elders, who had met John the Lord's disciple, remembered hearing him say how the Lord was going to speak of those times, they foretold: The days will come in which vines shall grow, having each ten thousand branches, and in each branch ten thousand twigs, and in each true twig ten thousand shoots, and in every one of the shoots ten thousand clusters, and on every one of the clusters ten thousand grapes. Every grape when pressed will give 25 metretes of wine [a metrete was about 40 liters]. And when any one of the saints shall lay hold of a cluster, another shall cry out: "I am a better cluster, take me; bless the Lord through me." In like manner, a grain of wheat will produce ten thousand ears, and that every ear would have ten thousand grains, and every grain would yield ten pounds of clear, pure, fine flour. And as for the apples and the seeds and the grass, they will yield accordingly. And all animals, nourished solely on the produce of the earth, will become peaceful and harmonious and in perfect submission to man. And he added the following: Now these things are credible to believers. And Judas the traitor, not believing, asked the question: "*How shall such growths be accomplished by the Lord?*" Whereupon the Lord answered: "*They shall see Him who shall come to them. These, then, are the times mentioned by the Prophet Isaiah: And the wolf shall lie down with the lamb, etc.*" »»

110) "Ante-Nicene Fathers", edited by Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe. # Christian Literature Publishing, Buffalo NY # 1885 (Vol. 1) Revised and edited for New Advent by Kevin Knight (www.newadvent.org/fathers). The original writings have been lost, but a number of fragments have been preserved thanks to the writings of Irenæus and Eusebius. The quote is from fragment 4.

The first message from God the Father:

“The time has come now for Me to reclaim my Glorious Kingdom.”

Book of Truth:

Message 124 of June 25, 2011 to Maria Divine Mercy.

My children let Me explain. The time has come for Me to reclaim the Paradise I lovingly created so that we can, again, become one family. A family that will become close because of the powerful bounds of love that will hold it together. This New Paradise on Earth is now being planned for all of my children.

It will last 1,000 years on earth and no one must be excluded for that would break my Heart. My beloved Son, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are trying hard to bring you back into my loving fold so that the Paradise, created in the beginning can, once again, emerge as the greatest gift of all, for my children to enjoy

This Paradise will be a place of love, beauty, glory and will be home to all who are pure of heart and soul. It is for every single soul on earth and is the goal that is contained within each and every single soul on earth, including those who do not realise this.

My Son speaks to the world and prepares to show his great mercy during The Warning [the enlightenment of the conscious] to give all sinners a chance to enjoy the New Paradise on Earth.

You must hear my voice. I call on all of you to pay attention. Turn back to Me. Accept that I exist. That I am the source of all life, all creation, all glory. When you do you will be welcomed into my Paradise on Earth which offers everything you could ever dream of. Listen to my Son and the message He gives to the world to convert you all. For those who will not listen, even then, or who continue on the path of heinous sin, no mercy will be shown. (...)

I am your God, your Creator. My love never dies. It is aflame and full of deep tenderness for you to bring you back to Me, to the inheritance I so lovingly created. Because of sin many of my children will have to forfeit their right to this inheritance and step back to allow those who truly love Me to enter the doors without hindrance.

Please children do not dismiss my plea to mankind. Accept the Mercy now being offered by my beloved Son. Accept it with open arms.

God the Father,
Creator and Maker of All Things

Another famous Church Father, Irenaeus (ca 130-ca202), who was the bishop of Lyons, speaks about the Reign of Peace in his “Adversus Hæreses” (Book V). Born in Smyrna, he too had listened to the sermons of Polycarp. I end with a series of quotes: ¹¹¹⁾

«« Ch. 32:1: Inasmuch as some opinions of certain persons are derived from heretical discourses, it can be said that they are ignorant of God’s division into ages [dispensations] and of the mystery of the resurrection of the righteous and also of the [earthly] Kingdom, which heralds the commencement of the incorruptibility. Under this reign those who shall be worthy, will be gradually brought into the participation of the divine nature. It is necessary to tell them that they should respect those things, that it behoves the righteous to receive as the first ones the promise of the inheritance, which God promised to the fathers, and to reign in it after the resurrection and to behold God in this renovated creation – and that the [last] judgment takes place afterwards [when the reign has ended].

¹¹¹⁾ The Biblical quotations are translated directly from the writings of Irenæus.

Ch. 32:2: Thus, then, the promise of God, which He gave Abraham, remains steadfast. For thus He said: *"Lift up thine eyes, and look from this place where now thou art, towards the north and south, and east and west. For all the earth which thou seest, I will give to thee and to thy seed, even for ever."* And again He says: *"Arise, and go through the length and breadth of the land, since I will give it unto thee; and [yet] he did not receive an inheritance in it, not even a footstep, but was always a stranger and a pilgrim therein."*

Thus did he await patiently the [fulfillment of] God's promise, and apparently he was unwilling to receive from men, what God had promised to give him, when He said again to him as follows: *"I will give this land to thy seed, from the river of Egypt even unto the great river Euphrates."* If, then, God promised him the inheritance of the land, yet he did not receive it during all the time of his sojourn there, it must be, that together with his seed, that is, those who fear God and believe in Him, he shall receive it at the resurrection of the righteous. For his seed is the Church, which receives the adoption by God through the Lord, as John the Baptist said: *"For God is able from the stones to raise up children to Abraham."* Thus also the Apostle says in the Epistle to the Galatians: *"But ye, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of the promise."* And again, in the same epistle, he plainly declares that they who believe in Christ do receive Christ (according to) the promise to Abraham, thus saying: *"The promises were spoken to Abraham, and to his seed. Now He does not say: And of seeds, as if of many, but as of one: ...and to thy seed, which is Christ."* And again, confirming his former words, he [St. Paul] says: *"Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. But the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, declared to Abraham beforehand: In thee shall all nations be blessed. Thus, then, they who are of faith shall be blessed with faithful Abraham, and these are the children of Abraham."* Now God made promise of the earth to Abraham and his seed. Yet neither Abraham nor his seed, that is, those who are justified by faith, do now receive any inheritance in it, but they shall receive it at the resurrection of the righteous. For God is true and faithful. And on this account He said: *"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."*

Ch. 33:2: And again He says: *"Whosoever shall have left lands, or houses, or parents, or brethren, or children because of Me, he shall receive in this world an hundredfold, and in the coming [reign] he shall inherit eternal life."*

What are the hundredfold [rewards] in this world, the entertainments given to the poor, and the suppers given as a reward? These are for the times of the Kingdom, that is, upon the seventh day, which has been sanctified, [and thus that day] in which God rested from all the works which He created, which is the true sabbath of the righteous. During those times they shall not be engaged in any earthly occupation, but shall have a table at hand prepared for them by God, supplying them with all sorts of dishes.

Ch. 33:3: The predicted blessing, therefore, belongs unquestionably to the times of the Kingdom, when the righteous shall bear rule upon their rising from the dead, when also the creation, having been renovated and set free, shall fructify with an abundance of all kinds of food – thanks to the dew of heaven and the fertility of the earth.

Ch. 34:1: Isaiah himself has plainly declared that there shall be joy of this nature at the resurrection of the righteous, when he says: *"The dead shall rise*

again. Those, too, who are in the tombs shall arise, and those who are in the earth shall rejoice. For the dew from Thee is health to them."

And again with Ezekiel saying: "*Behold, I will open your tombs, and will bring you forth out of your graves. When I will draw my people from the sepulchres, and I put my breath in you ye shall live. I will place you on your own land and ye shall know that I am the Lord.*" And again the same [writer] speaks thus: "*These things saith the Lord, I will gather Israel from all nations whither they have been driven, and I shall be sanctified in them in the sight of the peoples of the world: and they shall dwell in their own land, which I gave to my servant Jacob. And they shall dwell in it in peace. They shall build houses and plant vineyards and dwell in hope, when I shall cause judgment to fall among all who have dishonoured them, among those who encircle them round about. Then they shall know that I am the Lord their God, and the God of their fathers.*" Now I have shown a short time ago that the Church is the seed of Abraham. And so it is that we may know that He who in the New Testament raises up from the stones 'children unto Abraham', is He who will gather, according to the Old Testament, those that shall be saved from all the nations.

Hfst 35:1: "*For, behold [says Isaiah], the day of the Lord cometh past remedy, full of fury and wrath, to lay waste the city of the earth, and to root sinners out of it.*" And again he says: "*Let him be taken away, that he behold not the glory of God.*" And when these things are done, he says: "*God will remove men far away (...) and those that are left shall multiply in the earth.*" "*And they shall build houses, and shall inhabit them themselves, and plant vineyards and eat of them themselves.*" All these and other words were unquestionably spoken in reference to the resurrection of the righteous, which takes place after the coming of Antichrist, and the destruction of all nations under his rule, and then [when the resurrection has taken place] the righteous shall reign the earth.

Hfst 35:2: Now this is what has been said by the Apostle: "*For the fashion of this world passeth away.*" To the same purpose did the Lord also declare: "*Heaven and earth shall pass away.*" When these things, therefore, pass away on this earth, according to John, the Lord's disciple, "*the New Jerusalem above shall descend (...) as a bride adorned for her husband*", [saying] "*this is the tabernacle of God, in which God will dwell with men.*" Of this Jerusalem the former one is an image, that Jerusalem of the former earth in which the righteous are disciplined beforehand for [the purpose of] the incorruptibility and [are thus] prepared for [their] salvation. And of this tabernacle [or temple] Moses received the scheme on the Mount [Horeb].¹¹²⁾

Nothing is capable of being allegorized [unless the text itself indicates otherwise], but all things are steadfast and true, they are on solid ground, having been given by God for righteous men's enjoyment. For as it is God who truly raises up a man, so also does man truly rise from the dead, and not allegorically, as I have shown repeatedly. And as he rises actually, he shall be actually prepared for the incorruptibility, and shall go forward and flourish in the times of the Kingdom, ready to receive the glory of the Father. Then, when all things are made new,

¹¹²⁾ On the 18th Sept. 2007 Jesus says to J.N.S.R. (Je Ne Suis Rien, or: Jésus Notre Seigneur Revient – I am nothing, or: Jesus our Lord returns): "The Third Temple is the very expression of God's Rest after He has gathered all his children. It will see the day, the 'Great Day of the Lord on Earth', erected in all minds in which God's Holy Spirit dwells. It is the Heavenly Jerusalem descended amongst you."

he shall truly dwell in the city of God. For it is said: "*He that sitteth on the throne said: Behold, I make all things new.*" And the Lord says: "*Write all this, for these words are faithful and true. And He said to me: They are done.*" And indeed this is the truth of the matter.

Hfst 36:3: John did distinctly foresee the first resurrection of the righteous and [their] inheritance in the Kingdom of the earth. What the [Old Testament] prophets have prophesied concerning this, harmonizes [with his vision].

Hfst 38: For in as many days as this world was made, in so many thousand years shall it be concluded. And for this reason the Scripture says: "*Thus the heaven and the earth were finished, and all their adornment. And God brought to a conclusion upon the sixth day the works that He had made. And God rested upon the seventh day from all his works.*" This is an account of the things formerly created, as also it is a prophecy of what is to come. For the day of the Lord is as a thousand years. And as in six days the created things [the material objects] were completed, it becomes evident that they will come to a [spiritual] conclusion at the end of the six thousand years [after Adam]. »»»



Would not God tell his Servants before Unleashing his Power?



Shall the Lion Jump and not Roar?

Unlike an ordinary lion, God warns its prey by roaring beforehand.
That gives the prey, us humans, the chance to withdraw from it
by turning repentantly to God's mercy.

19.87 – The Most Important Sign

Does a lion ever roar in the thicket when it has its eye on prey? Will the Lord do something great without announcing it? The future may be covered for us, but for God it is different. He appropriates the future in advance. And that is why the LION (GOD) roars. Doesn't the Prophet Amos tell (3:4,7): "*Does a lion roar in the forest unless it has caught a victim? (...) Whatever the Lord God plans to do, He tells his servants, the prophets [beforehand].*" Normally a lion roars only after it has caught its prey, but the Lord, through his prophets, roars in advance, giving the signs and warnings of what is to come. That gives us, the human prey, a chance to evade it through penance and repentance. Therefore, the disasters God roars, which He has in mind for his people, is a merciful roar. See verses 12 through 15 (abbreviated):

«« Only a few will escape who made it out alive and they have with them some broken pieces of their beds and couches. Just as a shepherd does not manage to salvage from the maw of a lion more than a few bones or a piece of an ear, neither will any of them be saved who hang on their beds and recline on their divans. Listen to these words and be warned: "*The day is coming when I will punish the land for its crimes with total devastation and destruction.*" »»

By the prophesied signs we little people can understand the times. The Bible is our travel guide, especially as far as the end times are concerned, which the majority of Bible prophecies are dealing with. World events in the wake of the officially recognized establishment of the State of Israel, make it abundantly clear that end-time prophecies are rapidly being made true. What few thought possible has happened in 1948: Israel returned to the land of their fathers! The Jewish people are back in the land that was given to them by God! But their legitimate taking of possession is now being contested by the chorus of nations, as prophesied by the famous Rabbi Malbim (1809-1879), even by nations that have never had anything to do with the Jews. Exactly as foretold, Israel's enemies are pounding on the walls of the land and on the gates of the eternal city. In fact, they are God's enemies, for Israel was formed into God's possession among all the nations. (Deut. 7:6, 14:2; Mal. 3:17) Whoever touches Judah touches the apple of God's eye. (Zech. 2:12) The Lord builds a wall of fire all around, an unassailable fortress. (Zech. 2:9) The world is stone-blind and overlooks the real factors. It has no eye for God's loftiness. (Isa. 26:10 ff.) Who is like God? (In Hebrew: Michael)

*What times, firmly foretold, of great forgiveness,
Of for all this earth's full revival!
When Israel shall see, Whose heart its hardness broke,
Whose side it pierced with the spear of the Gentiles,
And then – Christ's murder grieving at His feet,
Hearing Himself from His own mouth one day greet,
As the firstborn again of the nations!*

Isaac da Costa

May the establishment of the state in '48 have been a great sign, an even greater sign would be when in Ha'aretz ('the' Land) God will have torn down the walls of hatred that stand between the Jews and the Arab inhabitants living there, as an additional handout after the Jews have recognized Jesus as their Messiah. Predictably, in that situation, Hamas and Al-Fatah will have become increasingly isolated, and it is not illogical that they would then clash, for the lesson of the past is that in times of crumbling power they will be at each other's throats.

That Israel is going to repent is beyond question. In his commentary on the last three verses of the letter to the Romans, Isaac da Costa (1821-1905), this fiery prophet for our time, this erudite Christian coming from Judaism, said:

«« That the Jews will be converted is every Christian's wish, that they will be converted at the last, many Christians believe, but that they will do so independently of the Christian church, in a separate miraculous and glorious way, which God has reserved for them, and that they will thus immediately be restored to glory by God, is still an annoyance, yes, a folly to many Christians. »»

A folly perhaps for many, but not for me!

The well-known saying of Isaiah 40:1-2 goes like this: *"Comfort, yes, comfort my people, says your God. Speak comfort to Jerusalem and cry out to her that her misery has ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, for she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins."* Commenting on this, Da Costa announced:

«« Soon when Israel is converted, the whole world will be flooded with the light of the good tidings. Yes, the promise to Israel includes all the promises to the nations. So Israel retains the inheritance right not to the detriment but to the

benefit of the nations. The promise to Israel is the capital of which the nations have the usufruct. Enjoy the latter, but keep your hand off the former. The annuities are more than abundant to make you immeasurably rich. Then leave the capital to Israel, for God has bestowed it on Israel. »»»

19.88 – The Deaf will Hear the Words of the Book

God's plan for the world involves the deep common destiny of the material world and Man, which is eagerly awaited; yes, creation itself will one day be freed from its bondage to decay! End-time theology and that of the Last Judgment are not a contradiction, but are seamlessly connected, with glorious promises ahead. Laetitia, rejoice! Still we live in the evangelical momentum, and for two thousand years. And thus we are on the way to a new and glorious chapter in God's plan of salvation for the blue planet, according to the Great Commission defined by God (Mt. 28:18-20): ¹¹³⁾

«« [After his resurrection] Jesus drew near [to his disciples] and spoke to them: *“All authority has been given to Me in Heaven and on Earth. Go therefore and make disciples out of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things I have commanded you. And lo, I will always be with you, even to the ‘end’ of the age (dispensation/period).”* »»»

The Greek word ‘sunteleia’ is used for the term ‘end’, which indicates a coming to completion, not a cutting off. The end time, which elicits such panicky reactions, is therefore not the end of ‘the time’, but the end of ‘an age’. God divides his plan with the world into phases or seasons, each of which draws to an end, such as: “...*the hour to reap has come*”.

Jedid Néfésj — beloved of my soul

Shabbat song by Rabbi Eliezer Azikri
16th century (last stanza)

*Do want to make you feel and spread, my Love,
the cover of Your peace over me,
illuminate the earth with Your glory.
Glad and joyful we will be with You.
Hurry, show love, because the time has come.
Show us Your grace as in the days of old.
Quickly show us Your love,
because the hour has come,
favor us as in the days of yore.*

How can we know if the end of an era is near? Will God not want to prepare His children, as He did when the Messiah was born? The prophet Daniel predicts in chapter 9 that 69 weeks would pass, or $69 \times 7 = 483$ years, from the beginning of the rebuilding of the

113) The Great Commission refers to several passages in the Gospel of Matthew, where Jesus exhorts his apostles to make “disciples in all nations” and to “baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit”. And so the Great Commission is usually explained as spreading the message of salvation in the repentant recognition of Christ’s atoning sacrifice on the Cross.

Temple until the times of the Messiah. Well, that coincided with the coming of Jesus Christ. There were more clues, such as from the three kings from the east when in Jerusalem they asked King Herod where the prophesied Messiah was. Their arrival must have been the talk of the town.

In our time, too, God will not remain indifferent when the dawn breaks through. The establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 is reminiscent of Jesus' prophecy in Luke 21:29-32: *"Look at the fig tree [an image of Israel], and all other trees. When they are already budding, you see and know for yourselves (...) that the Kingdom of God is near. (...) This generation will by no means pass away till all these things have come to pass."* The coming of the Kingdom of God, also known as the Reign of Peace, in addition to signifying the return of the ancient people to the land of their fathers, means that the prophecy of Isaiah 29:18 has come to fulfillment: *"In that day the deaf shall hear the Words of the Book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness."*, which abrogates the prophecy of verse 10 taken up by Paul in his Letter to the Romans (11:8): *"God has given the Jews a spirit of stupor, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, up to this very day."* It is a matter of waiting for the Jewish people to accept Jesus as their Saviour and Lord, so that from the State of Israel, which has hitherto been a terrible hotbed, peace may flow as from overflowing honeycombs. Is that perhaps too bold an assumption?

The thinking of the Theological Modernist

For the Theological Modernist, the divine exists as a separate construct alongside the material reality, and that would be self-evident. Consequently, we should respect and, possibly, conform to worldly realities. From his perspective, the divine and the material represent two realities that coexist in the sense that the material is the only objective measure available to us. That Jesus' incarnation proves the opposite eludes the Modernist. The Biblical prophecies which speak of the redemption of creation in a return to the paradisiacal state are for him only beautiful imagery, in fact babble in space.

See St. Pius X's 1907 encyclical on Modernism:
"Pascendi Dominici Grecis"

A traditional view is that Jesus Christ came to earth around 4000 AM (Anno Mundi: after Adam). And this is what the Panin chronology indicates.¹¹⁴⁾ So we would now be in about 6000 AM, on the threshold of the seventh day, that of the Reign of Peace. After all, to God a thousand years count as one day. (Ps. 90:4) I do know that not a few have an aversion to Bible chronology. Too much has been predicted in the past, too much fiddling in that area. Therefore, I will keep it short and go to the parable of the Good Samaritan, which only becomes clear in retrospect. (Luke 10:25-35) The Samaritan here is the image of Jesus, who mercifully passes through the land. In this parable, the innkeeper is given a prepayment of two denarii to care for the wounded traveler, who represents the image of our tormented world – until He, the Samaritan, returns just as He left. (Acts 1:11) The innkeeper in turn represents Christendom. The denarius, according to the parable of Matthew 20:1-16, is the wages of a day laborer. And thus this narrative indicates that Jesus would return after 2000 years (2 daily wages). This is only an indication, no more, as is true of the prophecies in the famous prophecy of Matthew 24 (in paraphrase):

«« You will hear of war and impending war, though that is not the end. One country will take up the sword against another. There will be famines everywhere and earthquakes, then here, then there. But that is only the beginning of woe. Christians will suffer excessive persecution. Philosophers, political scientists and

social reformers will call the shots (the root text says “*numerous false prophets*”). And the deep moral decay will cause the love of neighbor to cool in many. Only when the Gospel has been proclaimed throughout the world will the end come. »»

19.89 – Proclaim a Holy Lent

The Prophet Joel says: “*Blow the trumpet on Zion. Sound the alarm on my Holy Mountain.*” A day of darkness and sadness dawns, of worldwide destruction from which there is no escape. Yes, the heavens tremble and sun and moon lose their luster. But first, yes first, Joel announces a time of mourning:

«« Gird yourselves and lament, you priests. Wail, you who minister before the altar. Come, lie all night in sackcloth, you who minister to my God, for the grain and drink offerings are withheld from the House of your God. Proclaim a Holy Lent, call a sacred assembly, gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the House of the Lord your God, and cry out to the Lord. (...) [Near is the Day of the Lord; the day of destruction,] for the harvest in the field has gone waste. The vine is withered, the fig tree withered; pomegranate, date palm and apple tree, yes, all the trees are withered. Withered is also the joy among men. »»

When the staff of bread breaks¹¹⁵) that’s an irrefutable sign that the Day of the Lord is near. That day is coming! Tribulations are many, always have been, but then ‘the great tribulation’ announces itself. Even then it is not too late, because God allows Himself to be besought, as is shown by the history of the covenant people. The Prophet Jeremiah confirms that it sometimes happens that God speaks to a people to say that He is going to uproot, demolish and destroy them. And when at these words the people turn away from their evil deeds, God regrets the disasters He had in mind for them. Now is the time for a national mourning and this is not entirely new either. Before the French Revolution, following the Old Testament example, the States of Holland were used to write out days of prayer and fasting:

«« The king arranged himself to a fast, had loudly proclaimed days of penance. He abandoned his throne, stripped himself of the royal garments, and after covering himself with sackcloth, threw himself to the earth before the Heavenly Lord. And the Lord looked down graciously on the Ninevehs, heard their supplications and sighs. »» Paraphrased from a sermon by Reverend Joannes Vollenhove (1631-1708).

Joel also made himself heard from:

«« Now, therefore - says the Lord - turn to Me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping and mourning. So rend your heart, and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great

114) Ivan Panin (1855-1942) was a Russian immigrant to the United States. When, in the 1980s, as a well-known Atheist, he confessed to have converted to Christ, it was immediately front-page news. His language skills allowed him to read the Bible in its original languages. His continuous Bible chronology is solely based on the internal logic of the Bible itself – an enormous feat. Each calendar year is logically underpinned. He was able to solve a number of unsolvable chronological problems in the Old Testament based on clues from the New Testament. According to Panin’s Bible chronology, Jesus was born in the year 3,999 after Adam.

115) Ezekiel 4:16 : “Moreover He said: Son of man, behold, I will break the staff of bread in Jerusalem: and they shall eat bread by weight, and with care; and they shall drink water by measure, and with troubled mind.” In Sweden, as in ancient Israel, people make round loaves with a hole in the middle, which are pushed onto sticks at the baker’s. A broken breadstick thus signifies famine.

kindness, and relents from doing harm. Who knows, He might revoke his sentence and leave a blessing behind, so that you can again offer grain and wine offerings to the Lord your God. »» (Joel 2:12-14)

19.90 – God Back in Holland again!

The crop failures in the vein of the Prophet Joel are no other than an exhortation to stand in penitence and repentance before God's throne in the style of Daniel 9: *"Lord, spare your people; do not let your inheritance be sneered at. Restore your Glory. A total ruin, that your great Name will not tolerate! Remember your Covenant, firmly sealed with Jesus' Blood!"* In an entire reading of the Book of Joel, one of the short books, this theme emerges clearly.

Do not think that this prayer will be fruitless. God has a plan for the Netherlands. Whether humanity in a larger context will take God's exhortations to heart remains to be seen. But for the Netherlands, that low country by the sea, there is no doubt. Is it not written on Da Costa's tombstone in the Nieuwe Kerk (New Church) in Amsterdam: *"O Holland! Thou shalt one day again become the Israel of the West! God will gird thy Church with light, thy kings with David's honor!"* Da Costa even went so far as to verse: *"One more time all will bow to Holland under Jesse's vane."* For him, the God of Israel was also the God of Holland; for him, both nations had their own place in God's salvation history. And from that position he saw *"a three string cord that could not easily be broken"* – also known as God, Fatherland and Orange!

A national mourning for the national sins against God, will also include a clean-up of the Dutch governmental system, where lawlessness is the order of the day. The call for law-enforcement is just froth, an empty cry! A certain Nico wrote on a blog:

«« To me, politics and justice are like soaps, an occupation mainly occupied by corrupt members of our society. But then again, that is nothing new... For me, this explains why Jesus did not want to engage in politics, for He said: *"My kingdom is not of this [present] world."* (John 18:36) He was and is concerned with what is found in people's hearts. Ultimately, that's where every revolution begins, so that people's lives, families and even entire societies will change in their inner being. »»

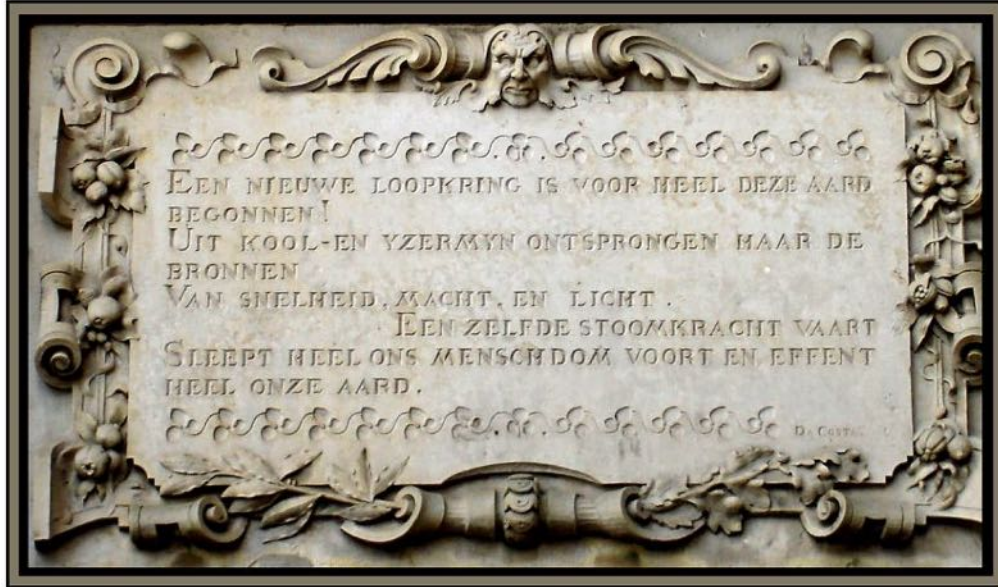
In about the year 1930, Reverend Hermanus Hofman wrestled concerning the condition of our country and people before God. In a famed dream, he saw a new Holland resurrected, where law and justice dwelled and God's Word again took its place, as God wills, in state, church and society. And, overcome with joy, he cried out: *"God back in Holland again; Christ's royal office restored; our people one again!"*, so that the saying was fulfilled in due time:

«« Then it will happen that I will pour out My Spirit on all that lives. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, old people will dream dreams and young people will see visions; even over slaves and bondwomen I will pour out My Spirit at that time. »» (Joel 3:1-2)



The Coming Revival in the High North

- Isaac da Costa, a prophetic witness -



Footbridge at the Moreelse Park (Utrecht), property Dutch Railways

20.91 – Da Costa is rowing against the current of time

Undoubtedly, one of the great figures of the nineteenth century Netherlands was Isaac da Costa, who was reviled by the ‘enlightened ones’ of his time. ‘Dacostian’ was a term of abuse. Da Costa’s justified criticism of the libertine zeitgeist was perceived as obscurantism. He expressed his position in 1823 in a pamphlet written in flaming words, and called: “Objections to the Spirit of the Age”. He was only 25 years old at the time. In it, Rousseau, Voltaire, Diderot, Kant, Robert Owen and Lord Byron were knocked off their pedestal. He was also one of the great men of the Réveil.¹¹⁶ What interests us most in this figure are not his political insights or poetry, but his religious-historical vision of Israel’s place in God’s plan for the world, with which he found more resonance in the Reformed milieu of his time than in the Roman Church, where the image of “the Church instead of Israel” was invariably held, while the correct view is that the Church is a continuation of the Synagogue. In it Israel will one day take its God-given place again. After all, the New Covenant has been concluded with the people of Israel and not with the Church or with the people of the church. (Heb. 8: 8) But what then is that Church? The Church is our Mother, it is she who must comfort us, it is she who must be defended by us. The Church is the Mother and the Cradle, she is the Virgin and the Holy Child. She is in the arms of the Mother, holy and immaculate. And the Unblemished sees her as her child. For it is she, the Church of Christ her son, who must unite all her children from all races and religions.



Isaac Da Costa (1798-1860)

Wouldn't God's pew - in the front row - be long enough to hold a seat for Israel? Finally, it will appear that the Church is grafted onto the noble olive tree and not the other way around. As the letter to the Romans shows, Israel will be grafted back into what hers was, a moment that will not be far away since the veil laying before their eyes was removed in 1840.¹¹⁷⁾ (Rom. 11:10; 17-24) The Christian churches have always reserved seats for individual members of Judaism, but do not know what to do with the people as a political, religious and cultural entity. The political element could only arise after the establishment of the State of Israel, some seventy years ago. So it is interesting to look at this from a religious perspective. Da Costa can help us with that.

20.92 – Da Costa's Background



Isaac was born on January 14, 1798 from an old Portuguese merchant family in Amsterdam. In the Da Costa house, Jewish festivals and customs were strictly observed. He was gifted. At the age of 23, he had already been doctored twice, first in law and then in literature. During his life he mastered ten languages. Willem Bilderdijk, who brought the Réveil to the Netherlands, had experienced the irreligion of the French Revolution in all its misery. He would be the instrument in God's hands to bring Isaac da Costa to Christianity. In total, Da Costa published seventy books. No small feat! An important Dutch book is "Israel and the Nations, an Overview of the History of the Jews until Our Time", which came off the printing press in 1848.

He decided to become a Christian in 1820, at first secretly because he did not want to grieve his father who died shortly afterwards in 1822. After reading Isaiah chapters 11, 53 and 61 he became completely convinced that *"this Jesus the Nazarene is the king of the Jews, but also my Lord and my God."* He says of himself: *"Who would have ever thought that a man like Saul of Tarsus would be converted? But I can also say this about myself. Am I not also a Jew, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, on the side of my father and my mother; who also mocked the name of Jesus in my youth; and who would then, I say not said, but have thought that I myself should preach the Gospel of Christ?"* In 1821 he married in accordance with the rites of the Jewish church. His wife Hannah also became secretly a Christian and thus a precious sister in Christ. Only after the death of his father do they both go public and are baptized. As baptismal text they choose Romans 11:5: *"So now there is also a remnant according to the election of grace."* It is striking that as from his baptism a prophetic spirit was revealed to him, with the emphasis, as far as Israel is concerned, on God's 'unconditional' election.

Theologically, the unconditionality of Israel's election is contained in the Abrahamic or Dome Covenant, which encompasses all other covenants that God made with Israel, and in extenso with all the nations of the earth. The unconditionality follows from the condition in place then, now almost four thousand years ago, which has been fulfilled once and for all, for God swore by Himself, while making the Covenant: *"...because you [Abraham] have done this thing"*. 'Have done' is in the past tense. What was once done cannot be undone, and so does the Covenant. This 'thing' that God is talking about was Abraham's willingness to sacrifice Isaac, the promised son. Contrary to what paintings

116) The Réveil was a revival of Protestant thinking. Not only in the Netherlands this kind of revival happened, in particular it happened in the eastern part of France and in Switzerland, where this movement originated, and in southern Germany. In addition, there were contacts in Great Britain too. The Réveil not only influenced political matters. In practice it was also important for all kinds of social work. Finally, evangelism and missionary zeal received important impulses from this movement.

117) To understand what is meant by "the veil laying before Israel's eyes was removed in 1840", see the appendix: "The Damascus Affair: Turning Point in History".

show, Isaac was not a boy but a grown man, and was then 36 years old. The sacrifice of the two, father and son, cannot be seen independently from Abraham's previously acquired righteousness (Gen. 15:6, Heb. 11:17), now supplemented by that of Isaac, because willingly and trusting in God, he allowed himself to be taken along. Isaac was not killed, because God had foreseen and would later do so through the Son of Righteousness, God's only begotten Son. Because of this 'foreseeing' the Jews never speak of 'sacrifice' but of 'the binding of Isaac' (Isaac was tied with ropes), the Jewish title also of the relevant chapter, which is - without exaggeration - one of the most important in the entire Bible.

Soon, Da Costa's home became a meeting point for anyone interested in religion, every Sunday morning from 8:00 to 10:00 o'clock. Week after week people crowded into his side- and living room: rich and poor, learned and illiterate. He then gave a simple explanation of a portion of the Old Testament that he illuminated with readings from the New. He opts for a literal interpretation, that is to say, after the full force and actual meaning of the words - and said - because the Bible is a Jewish book and should be read as such. On November 7, 1852, he gave his final Bible talk on Ezekiel 37: the dry dead bones that became alive! Da Costa did not see the revival of Judaism in his time in science and art as a resurrection from the tombs, but as "*a stir of the bones*". And how right he was! On April 28, 1860, he died, aged 62, at the end of the Jewish Sabbath and the beginning of the Christian Sunday. During the funeral, the triumphal hymn was sung, composed by Da Costa himself, wherein the meaning of "*your dead*" clearly pointed to Israel. In this way this son of Israel said goodbye:

«« Your dead are about to awaken with shouts of thanks and praise! Dew, as Eden once watered, will sprinkle their dust. Where, O death, is your sting! Where o Hell, your force majeure? To the Lamb that hath prevailed, that hath wrought redemption, that hath bought us with his Blood, be worship, praise, and honour brought for ever! »»

20.93 – Da Costa's Millennium Vision

I certainly do not always agree with Da Costa. For instance, he did not like the papacy, which he lumped together with the Talmud, for he considered it an error of later Judaism and of the early Christian church that they thought they should have added something human to the divine. This is a very un-Jewish thought. Converted to Protestantism he could not help but reject the tradition within the Roman Church and at the same time also had to reject the Talmud which, let it be said, has added a number of things that should not have been added. But broadly and as far as Israel is concerned, he has said meaningful and remarkable things. I would like to say that the Roman Church has not added to the original doctrine, but on the contrary has watered it down.

An important theme for Da Costa was the Millennial Kingdom of Peace in which Israel may again be counted among God's people. "Not-My-people" (Lo-Amni) has become "My-people" (Amni) (by the way: has become visible already):

«« And it will come to pass that where it has been said to them: "*You are not my people*", it will be said: "*You are children of the living Lord.*" And the children of Judah and the children of Israel will be gathered together and stand behind one leader. (...) I will say to Lo-Amni: "*You are My people*", and it will exclaim: "*O my God!*" »» (Hos. 1:10; 2:22)

To the view that the Kingdom of Peace has started already or had started in the past, he replied: "*Well, then it must certainly have taken place in a dream, because no one noticed it or saw anything about it.*" Da Costa eagerly looked forward to the Second Coming, as

foretold in Acts 1:11, among others. “*The password for all is: Behold He is coming. We don’t know when He is coming, but must be ready when He comes. How? By expecting Him daily.*” Many of his poems therefore ended with “*Lord Jesus come!*” And he went on: “*Is that too earthly a thought? Is it too earthly a thought that Jesus wandered on earth?*” Da Costa looked forward to a glorious time for church and world. He wrote about it in words like this: ¹¹⁸⁾

«« Though the prophecies of Christ’s coming and suffering may have been fulfilled, the glory to follow awaits its final destination. Likewise, the prophecies about the destruction of Jerusalem and its environs and Israel’s scattering and punishment are fulfilled, but the blessed and glorious condition of that same land and people remain unfulfilled. The Jews did not accept Jesus’ scorn on the redemptive Cross, but Christianity rejected his glory, the glory of the theocratic arrangement of David’s Son and Lord, established on David’s throne [in the Roman Catholic prophetic tradition known as the Great Monarch]. This dichotomy occurred because the church on earth committed itself to the allegorical, mind-obscuring interpretation of Christ’s words. And this produced the peculiar phenomenon that a series of centuries under the New Testament dispensation, as a result of the misunderstanding of the prophetic Word by Christians, it was still only the Jews, disbelieving in Jesus, who continued to cling to the expectation of a messianic kingdom on earth, albeit still in an indefinite distant future. »»

The Rise of the Dutch Réveil

Da Costa has caused a stir with his pamphlet “Zeitgeist against the spirit of the century”. Nobody wanted to be seen with him anymore. Even some of his friends dared to visit him only after nightfall. This pamphlet has rightly been called the birth of the Dutch Réveil. Marie Elisabeth Kluit observes in her authoritative book “The Protestant Réveil in the Netherlands and beyond 1815-1865” that the Réveil had no elaborated theological system of its own and saw itself mainly embodied in persons that appealed to the imagination. Not infrequently they emerged from the aristocracy. And they were all scholars and often artists. They focused on the practice of piety. Sometimes they showed heroic bravery. They did not escape reproach, but stood firm for the confession of Jesus Christ. From those specific ingredients arose a revival. Isaac da Costa gave the impetus to a revival with his aforementioned writing that eventually penetrated all sections of Dutch society. The undisputed leader of this movement would become the statesman Groen van Prinsterer, of whom it was said: “*People gladly support you and rightly so*”. Outwardly calm and composed, with a fire within that burned for the truth. “*The Gospel against the Revolution*” was his battle cry with which he expressed popular feelings. Réveil is a term that the movement only got later, formerly called “The Christian Friends”.

A vista revealed to the prophet Jeremiah, then far beyond the human horizon, looks like this (Jer. 23:5-6): “*Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, that I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness. A King shall reign and prosper and execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved and Israel dwell safely.*” This vista is projected by the Roman Catholic prophetic tradition on the Great Monarch. The terms in which this prince is spoken of in Biblical visions and in the prophecies of saints are often so laudatory that there is no distinction between Jesus Messiah and the Great Monarch. That is because at the outset of his reign the Monarch will be clothed with Christ, accompanied by such a great manifestation of power, glory, and divine

¹¹⁸⁾ This paragraph is based on the preface Isaac da Costa wrote for Lewis Way’s book “The Lord is King” (Amsterdam - 1850).

authority that of the ancient man, before he became the Monarch, little remains. That is why the Messiah and the Monarch are so alike in the predictions. In a way they have become identical twins. Says Agnès Marie in her prophecy of Dec. 5th 1999: ¹¹⁹⁾ *"In due time the soul of that man [who will be the Great Monarch] will be completely clothed with Christ by a special grace, and from then on he will have little to do with what he once was."* About the aforementioned verses of Jeremiah, Da Costa, who looked forward to a personal reign of Jesus to be seated on an earthly throne, said the following:

«« God is immutable and therefore Israel is imperishable. By human power, Jerusalem and Israel cannot be destroyed or restored to their former state. Israel has rejected its Messiah, but the Messiah has not rejected Israel, on the contrary. He has promised to return to his people with forgiveness in one hand and honor and glory in the other. (And at Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, he notes:) All God-given promises regarding David and his kingdom have yet to be fulfilled. His throne and crown have been forgotten by the nations, not so by the Jews. »»

In "Israel and the Nations" Da Costa speaks of an improper and unfair interpretation when the suffering of Christ is taken literally on the one hand but his glory on the other spiritually; as well as those interpreters who attribute the punishments to Israel literally, but the blessings and promises spiritually, destined for the fellowship of believers of the nations only. He wrote: *"Take away the Messiah's kingdom and reign on the earth and you tear away thirty, forty chapters from the Scriptures."*

In his Bible readings, Da Costa states: *"My people still bear a Cain mark: fleeing until the end of time, but one day they will come in from without as the eldest son, and the joy will be complete."* Commenting on Psalm 129, biblically entitled: *"The church of God persecuted, but not cut off"*, he sighs: *"No, there is no more downcast nation than the Jews, and no more sorrowful history than theirs, and yet... the beginning of this history was grace, and its end will be glory."* His commentary on Isaiah 45:21 goes like this, in which God says: *"Who predicted long ago what would happen? Was it not I, the Lord, the God who saves his people?"*:

«« The people of Israel were miraculously born – born of the promise when Sarah was 91 years old. And it will also be reborn by a miracle later at its conversion – also from the promise. Israel is the focal point from which all the rays of God's glory have emanated, and to which they will one day return. »»

Da Costa cannot fail to note here: *"Ah, Israel expects recovery, but does not yet know the Restorer. And many of us know the Restorer, but do not expect the recovery."*

Da Costa also pays tribute, in relation to the letter to the Romans, last three verses, a view about the Jews that I fully agree with, which does not mean that they and the ordinary Christian Church will always remain separate from each other, but in that regard, however, in the beginning of their conversion in recognition of Christ as their Messiah:

«« For the Jews to be converted, every Christian desires. That they will be converted at last, many Christians believe, but that they will become so independent of the Christian church, in a separate miraculous and glorious way that God has reserved for them, and so immediately come back to glory by God, this is still an offense to many Christians, even a folly. »»

And at Luke 24:47: *"That (...) in His Name they should preach to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem"*, Da Costa arrives at the following original conclusion:

«« So, the Lord also started his new dispensation [that of the New Testament] with Jerusalem and let me whisper a secret in your ear, where God begins with,

119) "Joie de Dieu - Messages donnés à Agnès-Marie" – Ed. Résiac, Montsûrs, France.

He also ends with it. He will return to Jerusalem once more with all the fulness of his grace, and then Jerusalem will be called Jehovah Shamma: the Lord is there! »»

By the well-known saying of Isaiah:

«« Comfort, yes, comfort ye my people! (...) Speak comfort to Jerusalem and cry out to her that her warfare is ended; that her iniquity is pardoned. For she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins. »» (Is. 40:1-2)

Da Costa utters the following meaningful words:

«« Later, when Israel is converted, the whole world will be inundated with the light of the Gospel. Yes, the promise to Israel includes all the promises to the nations. So, Israel retains the right of inheritance not to the detriment but to the benefit of the nations. The promise to Israel is the capital of which the nations have the usufruct. Enjoy the latter, but keep your hand from the former. The annuities are more than abundant to make you immeasurably rich. Then leave the capital to Israel, for God has given it to Israel. »»

20.94 – *The Three-Cord String*

Da Costa's messianic expectation for the people of Israel was not well received, all the less with regard to his messianic expectation for the Netherlands. Together with Hermann Friedrich Kohlbrugge (1803-1875) and Philippus Jacobus Hoedemaker (1839-1910), Da Costa nurtured an indestructible belief in Holland's special place in God's plan of salvation. His memorial in the New Church in Amsterdam reads: "*O Netherlands! You will one day become the Israel of the West! God will gird your Church with light, your kings with David's honour!*" Da Costa even went so far as to write: "*Once more, everything will bow to Holland under Jesse's banner.*" (Jesse was David's father and forefather of Jesus.) To him, the God of Israel was also the God of the Netherlands; both nations had their own place in the history of God's salvation. And indeed, nowhere in the world had the Jews "*...found a so refreshing hospitality as in this reformed land, so broadly blessed by the God of Israel.*"

Da Costa accepted the Netherlands as a second Israel, a belief that, it must be said, tempered with aging. He was not so much in a Jewish tradition, but in line with the Reformed historiography prior to the French Revolution, in which the experiences of the Dutch people were compared with that of the people of Israel. Da Costa was convinced, as this writer, that God had entered into a covenant with William of Orange for the cause of the Netherlands in which God "*...wanted to connect the church of Christ with the Dutch people and Nassau's princely tribe into a three-cord string, which would not be easily broken.*" The three-cord string refers to Ecclesiastes 4:12, and it resulted in the famous "God, Fatherland and Orange". A similar cry is used in Poland: "God, Honour, Fatherland" (Polish: Bóg, Honor, Ojczyzna), which since 2018 is written on their passport. Da Costa thought the Netherlands was exceptionally favored because its church was chosen by God; the Dutch royal House of Orange was called, in this covenant, to protect the Reformed Church in the Netherlands and to stand for its calling.¹²⁰⁾

Isaac da Costa was of the opinion that the eighty-year struggle for independence (1568-1648) against the Habsburg (Spanish) rule, from which the Netherlands originated, had various causes, but that the real purpose was given by God: "*...the establishment of a mighty bulwark of Reformation, of a place of unshakable security at the service of the*

120) Orange's call to stand up for the Protestant church in the Netherlands has in practice often led to a virulent anti-Roman attitude, which, as always, is due to human shortsightedness. All this does not affect God's plan for the Netherlands, which at one time will be a beacon of light in a secured courtyard.

Church of Christ, as of a separate Israel under Christendom.” There were several occasions in the Dutch national history when the ‘God be with us’ was obvious,¹²¹⁾ like the rescue during the Disaster Year of 1672, when Holland was attacked from all sides, and yet we were saved in this seemingly hopeless situation – a true *deus ex machina*.

The Coming of Two Messiahs

Jewish tradition expresses the belief in the arrival of two messiahs. The first, Messiah Ben Joseph (ben = son of), would be the suffering servant. The Talmud even compares Him to “*whom they pierced*”. The second, Messias ben David, was to come as a victorious authority and saviour of his people. This person does not have to be the same one as the first. The first has been recognized by Christians as the God-man Jesus Christ. The second, known as the Great Monarch, may very well be an ordinary person. Looking forward to the coming of a second messiah, who is a human and not God, is not only consistent with the Jewish tradition, but also with the prophetic tradition of the Roman Catholic Church, with truly an abundance of prophecy. Some important prophecies in this regard are from St Francis of Paola (1416-1507), Nostradamus (1503-1566), Pastoor Holzhauser (1613-1658), Bernard Rembort, alias Spielbähn (1689-1783) and also Marie-Julie Jahenny (1850-1941). This messiah is often referred to as “the great king” or “king of kings”, but also under other titles such as “the man of God, the noble exile, the white lily, the prince given by God, the king sent by providence, the finger of God, God’s chosen, the God-sent, God’s predestinated, God’s instrument”, but also “Messiah, Christ, lieutenant, substitute”, and even “son of man”. The titles attributed to the Great Monarch are taken from B. Bahlmann’s “Christians Awake”, a little-known self-published Dutch work, published in 1986. Better known in this sense are the publications of the Marquis de la Franquerie, as well as those of Baron de Novaye: “Demain... ?, d’après les Concordances frappantes de 132 Prophéties anciennes et modernes” (Tomorrow...?, According to the Striking Concordances of 132 Ancient and Modern Prophecies), Ed. Lethielleux, Paris - 1934.

20.95 – The Netherlands, a Place of Refuge under the Antichrist

Just as Israel is destined to become the center for the establishment of God’s reign on earth, so Da Costa believed the Netherlands is destined to become a stronghold from which to proclaim the true doctrine in troubled times. He longed for the day when Israel will have converted to Christianity and then, once again, becomes a radiant center of God’s blessings on earth. He asked the Dutch nation to return to the covenant that God had made with their church and the House of Orange. Then, the Netherlands together with Israel, would become the center from which the message of salvation is going to be proclaimed to the rest of the world. Both peoples would thus rally for the advancement of the forthcoming Kingdom of God on earth.

Da Costa was not a loner. After Da Costa, Kohlbrugge and Hoedemaker, more people followed with a similar message. I am thinking of Herman Otto Roscam Abbing (1874-1939) and Reverend Hermanus Hofman (1902-1975) whose messages are highlighted here. My list is far from over. There are also recent examples, but these two are very impressive. The Dutch Reformed Reverend Roscam Abbing believed in the restoration of church and state in the Netherlands. In 1923 he spoke “*by order of the Most High*”: “*Thus the Netherlands shall become the center of a revival that will spread over the*

121) “God be with us” refers to Isaiah 7:14 which quoted in Matthew 1:23: “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bring forth a son and they shall call Him ‘Emanuel’, which is translated: God be with us.”

whole earth; everywhere where the Gospel was preached for a witness among all nations.” In 1934 he said in his speech “Opening of the times”:

«« But there’s more! The Netherlands is not set up to be sunk and overrun. It remains established to be a place of refuge during the dreadful night [of wickedness] that is going to come upon the world. The Netherlands is therefore being prepared so that people can spend there the night during that period. Emden was a refuge during the Inquisition in the Reformed age. Under the Antichrist, however, the persecutions will stretch much further. Hence, the refuge will be so much greater. »»¹²²⁾

And then there is Hermanus Hofman. He struggled around 1930 regarding the condition of the land and people before God and his testimony has become topical right now:

«« I saw that our homeland was like a ripe cornfield and God’s word was: *“Strike the sickle, for the harvest is ripe.”* I understood: That is the end of the Netherlands. I had to confess that God was righteous, but I could not stand the doom of my people. For me it was as if I stood between the living and the dead. Aaron took a censer at Moses’ command. But me, what could I do? Everything had been stained by sin, we had no rights, no claim to mercy. Evidently it was a closed case. But as everything had fallen away, God’s Covenant remained and I started pleading on it: what wilt Thou do with thy great Name? Wilt Thou then make a full completion? That’s impossible. Your glory will not tolerate that! Then I was answered twice: *“I have accepted your face in this matter”*, and: *“I will accept your petition.”* Then, while everything had blackened by God’s judgment, and the faces of the people were like a pot [upon the fire, so ashen], and they were at the point of exhaustion, I saw their return to God and I witnessed a new Holland, revived, where law and justice resided and God’s Word took the place again as God wants it in state, church and society. I was overwhelmed with unspeakable joy: *“God back in Holland! Christ’s royal office restored! Our people one again!”* And I sank away from joy and elation and slept a little while. When I woke up, I was shaking all over. Daniel says: *“Then I was sick for a few days.”* »»

In this context a dream comes to my mind from a good friend of mine some fifty years ago. In a pitch-dark room, a woman layed stretched out on the ground, unconscious, in extreme distress from the foul air that hung there. Her mouth was close to the threshold, below which a little bit of fresh air came in, just enough to stay alive. Suddenly the door was thrown open and the case was resolved. That woman supposedly represented the Netherlands, and the one who threw open the door was of course Christ – and the moment that is going to happen is, of course, the Enlightenment of Conscience, also known as The Warning, that will be given to all people on earth before the ghastly realm of Antichrist will be taking shape to its fullest extent.

As we understand from Da Costa’s words, the Netherlands will affiliate with Israel, now the State of Israel – the latter was already in his mind. Together they will be resurrected as in the vision of the ‘dry-bones valley’. (Ezekiel 37:1-14) Together in this sorrowful time, we are living in, they will be beacons of light, and each one will be a protected place. Then, the Netherlands will be rightly referred to as the Israel in the West. How wonderful are God’s ways. How gracious above all.

122) The port city of Emden is located just across the border in Germany, not far from Delfzijl, in the far northeast of the Netherlands. There, in 1571, the synod took place in which the foundations of the Reformed churches of the Netherlands were established. The first Dutch translation of the Bible was also born there. In Emden, people spoke Dutch at the time; politically it had a semi-independent status for a long time.

20.96 – Not just Nations are a Place of Refuge

The foregoing spoke of an entire nation as a place of refuge. The Netherlands will probably not be the only nation to be assigned this position. However, God also provides places of refuge within lands that suffer severe persecution. For the United States and Canada, there are prophecies of places of refuge in the vast wilderness of those lands. God also provides small places of refuge comparable to the catacombs under the Roman persecution of Christians, that flared up time and again.

The end-time prophetess Mary Divine Mercy speaks of such places of refuge in the so-called Book of Truth, especially in her message of November 20th 2010, when Jesus Christ says: *“Please find shelter as groups of believers. (...) Save what food you can and put it away. Begin to plan now as if awaiting a storm. Know that darkness will descend to such an extent, that to survive you must be prepared. Listen to the prophets. Don’t make the same mistakes when my people would not listen to my prophet Noah. They turned their backs on him; refused to listen, they went about their day-to-day lives, as they ate and laughed, in total oblivion to the horrible fate that awaited them.”* And on Jan. 21st 2012: *“They will have to offer Masses in refuges. Children, when this happens you must not lose hope. This will be over within a short period of time.”* And on July 8th 2012: *“In time the refuges will be ready for you to use for I (Jesus) have been instructing my followers for some time to ensure that they will serve your purpose.”* And twelve days later: *“The Sacraments will only truly be available from those priests and other Christian clergy who remain loyal to Me (Jesus). They will offer these Sacraments in special refuge-churches.”* Finally on August 5th 2013: *“I, the Mother of Salvation, will protect such refuges and by the placement of the Seal of the Living God, given to the world by My Father, on the inside walls, they will remain invisible to the enemies of God.”* Message related to Crusade Prayer 33 (May 16th 2012): *“My Gift of the Seal of the Living God will render you invisible to your enemies [operating through electronic detection devices]. Recite it every day from now on. Keep it before you in your homes and have it Blessed by a priest.”*



Recommended literature: “Da Costa, Bijbellezingen” (Bible readings), recorded and communicated by J. F. Schimsheimer, 1876-1880, reprint Van den Berg Publisher, 1983-84 (3 parts).

The Decline of the Catholic Magisterium A Sign of the Times



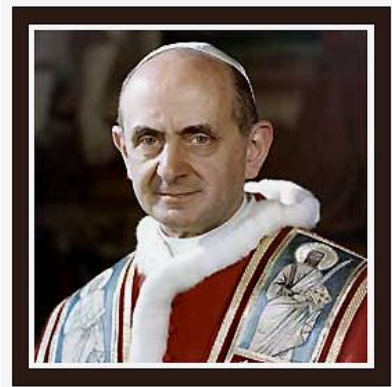
“When you see the Precursor, it can be said that the mission of ha-Yeshua Mashiach has begun!”, states an old Jewish saying. Who is the messenger other than the Virgin Mary? The growing series of announcements telling of the end of the times – think of Lourdes, Fatima and so many others – are all in the spirit of “convert, for the kingdom of God is at hand”. These series of announcements started in 1846 with Mary’s apparitions to the shepherds of La Salette, in which it was predicted that “the priests, ministers of my Son, the priests, by their wicked lives, by their irreverence and their impiety in the celebration of the holy mysteries, by their love of money, their love of honors and pleasures, these priests have become cesspools of impurity!” Thus the Mother of God is the herald sent to prepare the new era in which the universal magisterium will return to Judaism again. How the Catholic magisterium was endangered by the disastrous Council of the 1960s is placed here within the endtime perspective.

21.97 – A Devious Council...

It was on Thursday 11th October 1962 on the feast of Mary’s Divine Motherhood that the first session of the Second Vatican Council was held. After a silent prayer, Pope John XXIII broke into the first official prayer with the “Veni, Creator Spiritus” (Come, Holy Ghost, Creator). This prayer was uttered so that the Holy Spirit would lead the Council. Once the strains of the ‘Veni Creator’ had faded under the enormous vault of the basilica, the Book of the Gospels was laid ceremoniously on the altar, a custom dating back to the earliest councils. It was then that the Pope gave his opening speech. He spoke of his confidence that the Church would gain new energy and power from the Council and asked those present to “look to the future without fear”. His infectious enthusiasm was released when he said:

«« We feel we must disagree with those prophets of doom who are always forecasting disaster, as though the end of the world were at hand. (...) They say that our era in comparison with past eras is worsening, and behave as though they had learned nothing from history, the real teacher of life. (...) For history shows that things had not, in fact, been any better in the olden days. The greatest concern of the Ecumenical Council is this: that the sacred deposit of Christian doctrine should be guarded and taught more efficaciously (...) faithful to the sacred patrimony of truth received from the Fathers. »»

An apostolic council can choose when, and when not, to exercise the chrism of infallibility. This one was not to proclaim any new matter in doctrinal truth and certainly not infallible. The reason for the fiasco of the Council is that, though the guidelines formulated were under the aegis of the Holy Spirit, their subsequent and forced upon interpretation was not. The Pope wrote in his Spiritual Diary, four weeks before the Council started, that he felt driven by the Holy Ghost to convene the Council. It was by no means a wild idea, judging by the in-depth preparation that preceded it, a work that had in fact begun under Pope Pius XII, who in 1948 appointed Mgr. Francesco Borgongini Duca, old classmate and friend of the man who was later to become John XXIII, to the position of chairman of the preparatory workgroup for a council being planned for. One session would have sufficed as a form of 'aggiornamento', one of the key words of the Council, which means 'a bringing up to date', in such a way that the deposit of faith could be better pursued. Contrary to all previous councils, and explicitly stated, it was not a dogmatic council! The interpretation afterwards was dogmatic, in such a way that the very foundation of the Church was affected, which was possible due to the often vague formulation of the avalanche of 4 constitutions, 3 statements and 9 decrees. Vatican I had only 2 constitutions.



Pope Paul VI

In view of the bitter fruit produced by the Council, it would have been preferable to have held only one session. Pope John XXIII died after the completion of the first session on June 3rd 1963. The second session started mid-October under Pope Paul VI. The Council could have been stopped after the first session if they really wanted to. Not an easy thing, but it would have been possible. On his death bed, far too late, John XXIII gave the order to stop the Council,¹²³⁾ but this was not taken seriously by the cardinals present at the time, or it was obstructed. In total there were four sessions, the last one finished on December 8 1965. Vatican II took over three years to complete, compared to Vatican I which lasted from December 8, 1869 until October 20, 1870.

Moreover, it is extremely curious that this council was convened for an aggiornamento, essentially an accounting term, which means 'a bringing up to date' in such a way that the deposit of faith can be better pursued. Even a brief overview of the twenty General Councils of the Church shows that almost each of these councils was convened as an extraordinary measure to condemn heresies. The specific function of the universal magisterium during a general council is to fire off anathemas, condemn errors and redefine Catholic doctrine, where it is attacked or threatened to be falsified by heretical movements within the Church. In other words, holding a council to 'update' the doctrine was unheard

123) On his death bed the Pope exclaimed: "Stop the Council, stop the Council!", quoted by Kevin Haney in "The Stormy History of General Councils". Also confirmed by Jean Guittou, the only Catholic layman to serve as a peritus (expert) at Vatican, as well as by Michael Davies in "Apologia Pro Marcel Lefebvre".

of and inappropriate. The decision to convene the Second Vatican Council was not based on thorough consultation between the Pope and his counselors (the cardinals and the curia), as was customary, but was primarily based on a personal inspiration. This spontaneity was unusual, to say the least, and, as it turns out, very unwise. This headstrong pope seemed to be less humble than he suggested. Nor was he an anchor point with regard to the traditional doctrine, rather someone who let himself be carried away by wind and sea. He was a simple minded thinker as he frankly admitted. He had an inscrutable personality ...and yet he became pope.

In this context, the message of Fatima, which has never been made public, plays a role in the background. I do not want to withhold the following. The story goes that in May 1994 the French priest Raymond Arnette, who was then living in Germany and who had remained true to the tradition, was listening to religious music on his CD. Suddenly the music stopped and a voice spoke in the room, not from the inside, but in a normal way: ¹²⁴⁾

«« A wicked Council will be planned and prepared which will change the face of the Church. Many souls will lose the Faith, confusion will reign everywhere. The sheep will seek in vain for their shepherds. A schism will rend my Son's tunic. It will be the end of the times, announced in Scripture and recalled by me in many places. The 'abomination that maketh desolate' (Dan. 11:31) will reach its peak and call down the chastisement announced at La Salette. The arm of my Son that I can no longer hold back, will come down on this world which will have to expiate its crimes. All that one will hear of is wars and revolutions. The elements of nature will be shaken and will strike anguish into the best and most courageous of men. The Church will bleed from all her wounds. Blessed those who persevere and seek refuge in my Heart, for in the end my Immaculate Heart will triumph. — That is the Third Secret of Fatima (the voice said). »»

According to the instructions of Sister Lucia, the so-called Third Secret of Fatima had to be published in 1960 which would then have been under Pope John XXIII. Actually, on June 17, 1944, Sr. Lucia sent the sealed envelope to her Bishop José Alves Correia da Silva of Leiria-Fatima (a great believer in the apparitions, who remained on his post until his death in December 1957 after having been bishop there for 37 years). Upon the sealed envelope, Sister Lucia had written: *"By express order of Our Lady, this envelope can only be opened in 1960 by the Cardinal Patriarch of Lisbon or the Bishop of Leiria."* She also asked her bishop that the sealed envelope *"would definitely be opened and read to the world either at my death or in 1960, whichever comes first"*. [ibid.] Bishop da Silva placed that envelope later in a sealed envelope of his own with the inscription: *"This envelope with its contents shall be entrusted to His Eminence Cardinal D. Manuel, Patriarch of Lisbon, after my death."* However, this never happened; instead, for reasons never fully disclosed, orders came from Rome to deliver the envelope to the papal nuncio, along with the notebooks of Sr. Lucia and photocopies of all her writings on file in the chancery of Leiria. This was accomplished on March 16, 1957, and all these documents were delivered to the Vatican.

According to Cardinal Ottaviani and Monsignor Capovilla, secretary of the Pope, the envelope was still sealed when John XXIII opened it in 1959. On August 17 1959, the envelope was brought to the papal residence of Castel Gandolfo, by Monsignor Philippe, then an official at the Holy Office. The secret was read a few days later, according to Capovilla. Assistance in reading the Portuguese was given by Monsignor Paulo José

124) Source: St Thomas Aquinas Seminary in Minnesota belonging to the Pius X Society. The website of the seminary at the time informed that the identity of this priest was known, but that he preferred to remain unknown. He, the website said, always wears a cassock, but does not belong to the Pius X Society.

Tavarez of the Secretariat of State. Later, Ottaviani was allowed to read it. When the Pope broke open the sealed envelope and read the message that a disastrous council would be held for the Church, he was deeply shocked, the story goes, for he had announced in January his intention to convene that council, three months after he became pope ... and he should have canceled it now. The Third Secret disappeared in a drawer.

Pope John XXIII expected the Council to end in three months, just like the Italian Synod that preceded it, which issued, at the Pope's direction, very traditional decrees, such as the full retention of Latin during the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. He probably thought to have found a cheap solution. The Pope said: ¹²⁵⁾ *"We will come together for three months with all the Bishops of the entire world. We will begin on October 13 (1962). Then everything will be over with between December 8 and January 25. Everybody will go home, and the Council will be over and done with."* Little did he suspect how wrong he was! The later popes made the Third Secret known in an watered-down version, although they need not have been aware of it; perhaps they had no longer access to the original document. The 'secret' would no longer be relevant. All critical questions were thereby dismissed. They had had enough of all the commotion!

21.98 – An Attack on the Legitimate Doctrine

Within two months after the final session, on January 12 1966, Pope Paul VI said at the General Audience:

«« In view of the pastoral nature of the Council, it avoided any extraordinary statements of dogmas endowed with the note of infallibility, but it still provided its teaching with the authority of the Ordinary Magisterium which must be accepted with docility according to the mind of the Council concerning the nature and aims of each document. »»»

This means that while the documents prepared by Vatican II may contain some infallible statements, especially related to matters already defined by previous councils, they do not enjoy the indisputable status like the documents produced by the Council of Trent and Vatican I. That being said, Vatican II should not be interpreted in a vacuum. Everything contained in the conciliar documents must be seen in the context of the Church tradition and with the understanding that they cannot go against the former magisterial teachings. It also means the conciliar documents can be debated to a certain degree. Most importantly, it means they are subject to further definition and clarification by the Holy Father, who can most certainly make announcements on topics *ex cathedra* (only if he says so), and then they would become infallibly. That being said, the Catholic Church is still bound under the same doctrines and teachings as it was before Vatican II.

If you would like to know the legitimate teachings of the Church today, simply pull out a catechism from the fifties. One can also consult the excellent "Catechism of the Catholic Church", the so-called CCC, issued under the auspices of Pope John Paul II in 1992. The CCC responds to the wish, as it lived among many Prelates, to formulate an up-to-date and leading document in which 'all' points of theological truth and morale are discussed, which two are the elements of faith, in accordance to the secular tradition of the Church, as more specifically expressed in the catechical guidelines of the Council of Trent (1545-1563). The conclusion is simple: as concerns the fundamental teachings nothing has changed and it is the same today as it was yesterday and as it will be tomorrow. Of course, there are still quite some gray areas in Catholic doctrine that need elucidation, but those can in no way contradict the treasure of faith, as established in the dogmatic constitutions, which was built up during the past millennia.

¹²⁵⁾ Referred to in *Traditio*, which is an international journal, published annually and dedicated to the study of ancient and medieval history, thought, and religion.

Pope John Paul II approved the text of the CCC on June 25, 1992, which was presented to the world through the apostolic constitution *Fidei Depositum* on October 11, 1992, on the thirtieth anniversary of the beginning of Vatican II. It states the following:

«« After the renewal of the liturgy and the new codification of canon law for the Latin Church and that of the various Eastern Catholic Churches, this catechism represents a very important contribution in the realization of the renewal of all ecclesiastical life, which is the aim of the Second Vatican Council that has been effectuated. (...) For me – who had the special grace to be involved and actively participate in its progress – the Second Vatican Council has always been the point of reference for all my pastoral activities and has remained so, particularly during these pontifical years in a deliberate effort to apply the guiding principles of this Council as concretely and faithfully as possible at the level of each church and also of the Church as a whole. »»

The CCC's source language is neither Latin nor Italian, but French, the first world language, after all, the language of diplomacy and of the country traditionally called "the oldest daughter of the Church". After a number of revisions and corrections, the definitive version was finally published in 1998. The Pope considered this to be the most important document of his pontificate, which he believed would also be considered his most important contribution in future.

But how, in spite of its careful preparation, was it possible that the Council managed to introduce such radical changes within the Catholic Church? I now quote from "The Rise and Fall of Annibale Bugnini", or "The Destruction of the Catholic Faith through changes in Catholic Worship" by Michael Davies from 1990, also called "Liturgical Time-Bombs in Vatican II":

«« Seventy-five preparatory schemata had been prepared for the Council Fathers, the fruits of the most painstaking and meticulous preparation for a Council in the history of the Church. The number was eventually reduced to twenty, and seven were selected for discussion at the first session of the Council. The Bugnini schema was the fifth of these, and it was presumed by most bishops that the schemata would be debated in their numerical sequence. But the other schemata were so orthodox that the liberals could not accept them – even as a basis for discussion. At the instigation of Father Edward Schillebeeckx the schemata were rejected with one exception – the Bugnini schema. This, he said, was "*an admirable piece of work*". It was announced at the second general congregation of the Council in 1962, that the sacred liturgy was the first item on the agenda for examination by the Fathers. *Notitiae* looked back on this with considerable satisfaction in 1972, remarking that the Bugnini preparatory schema was the only one that was eventually passed without substantial alteration. Father Ralph Wiltgen comments in "The Rhine Flows into the Tiber: A History of Vatican II": "*It should be noted that the liturgical movement had been active in Europe for several decades, and that quite a large number of bishops and periti (experts) from the Rhine countries had been appointed by Pope John to the preparatory commission on the liturgy. As a result, they had succeeded in inserting their ideas into the schema and gaining approval for what they considered a very acceptable document.*" (...) The Bugnini schema received the almost unanimous approval of the Council Fathers on December 7, 1962 and became Vatican II's "Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy". But the Constitution contained no more than general guidelines. Therefore, to achieve total victory, Father Bugnini and his cohorts needed to obtain the power to interpret and implement it. (...) The Liturgy Constitution, based loosely on the Bugnini schema, contained much generalised and, in places ambiguous terminology. Those who had the power to interpret

it were certain to have considerable scope for reading their own ideas into the conciliar text.

Cardinal Heenan of Westminster mentioned in his autobiography "A Crown of Thorns" that the Council Fathers were given the opportunity of discussing only general principles: "*Subsequent changes were more radical than those intended by Pope John and the bishops who passed the decree on the Liturgy. His sermon at the end of the first session shows that Pope John did not suspect what was being planned by the liturgical experts.*"

The Cardinal could hardly have been more explicit. (...) The experts (periti) who had drafted the text, intended to use the ambiguous terminology they had inserted in a manner that the Pope and the Bishops did not even suspect. The English Cardinal warned the Council Fathers of the manner in which the periti could draft texts capable "*of both an orthodox and modernistic interpretation.*" He told them that he feared the periti, and dreaded the possibility of their obtaining the power to interpret the Council to the world. "*God forbid that this should happen!*" he exclaimed, but happen it did. >>>

The Bugnini schema was accepted by a plenary session of the Liturgical Preparatory Commission in a vote taken on January 13, 1962. But the President of the Commission, the eighty-year old Cardinal Gaetano Cicognani, had the foresight to realize the dangers implicit in certain passages. Father Gy writes: "*The program of reform was so vast that it caused the president, Cardinal Gaetano Cicognani, to hesitate.*" (Flannery p. 23) Unless the Cardinal could be persuaded to sign the schema, it would be blocked. It could not go through without his signature, even though it had been approved by a majority of the Commission. Father Bugnini needed to act. He arranged for immediate approaches to be made to Pope John, who agreed to intervene. He called for Cardinal Amleto Cicognani, his Secretary of State and the younger brother of the President of the Preparatory Commission, and told him to visit his brother and not return until the schema had been signed. The Cardinal complied. Later a peritus of the Liturgical Preparatory Commission stated that the old Cardinal was almost in tears as he waved the document in the air and said: "*They want me to sign this but I don't know if I want to.*" Then he laid the document on his desk, picked up a pen, and signed it. Four days later he died.¹²⁶⁾

When we use an ambiguous language in ecclesiastical documents, we think of the small synod of Pistoia in Italy from 1786 on the eve of the French Revolution. Pope Pius VI, in the introduction to his "Auctorem Fidei" (for the protection of faith), condemned its use of language. How does this conviction remind us of Vatican II !

«« In order not to hurt the Catholic ears, the innovators camouflaged their winding paths through a sophisticated and seemingly harmless use of language. With this they wanted to pave the way to introduce unobtrusive and sweet-voiced errors into souls. Once the truth was compromised, they could twist the salutary faith message by minor alterations in sentence structure or additions to bring the faithful to their eternal damnation along subtle avenues of error. This veiled fraud is evil regardless of the circumstances in which it occurs. For very good reasons, this is unacceptable to a synod whose supreme glory should be the clear teaching of the truth, avoiding [through careful language use] any danger of misinterpretation. >>>

In the aftermath of the Council, there is no doubt that there was a cunning conspiracy, a long-prepared manipulative intervention. To illustrate: The 1969 Novus Ordo Mass (New Mass), which was formulated on the instructions of the Council, did not follow the

126) Based on "The Rhine Flows into the Tiber" by Father Ralph M. Wiltgen - TAN Books, Rockford, U.S.A. # 1985 (p. 141).

instructions. Her approach was a never-before-seen breach from the past. It was not a logical follow-up of the decisions of the Council and was not in line with an established practice or belief. It was decreed from the top down and did not meet the requirement of organic development (a slow build-up over time). Monsignor Klaus Gamber is recognized as one of the best liturgists of the 20th century. He concluded with regard to the liturgical reform *“Obviously, the reformers wanted a completely new liturgy, a liturgy that differed from the traditional one in spirit as well as in form; and in no way a liturgy that represented what the Council Fathers had envisioned, i.e., a liturgy that would meet the pastoral needs of the faithful.”* ¹²⁷⁾

That there was a cunning conspiracy, was underlined in Pope Paul VI's address to the Lombard Seminary of Rome on December 7 1968. He was the one who promulgated the Council documents in 1965. Just three years after the completion of the Council, he began to reject the fruits of that Council, and started even associating it with the work of the devil. He issued a number of startling statements to that effect:

«« The Church finds herself in an hour of anxiety, a disturbed period of self-criticism, or what would even better be called selfdestruction (auto-distruzione). It is an interior upheaval, acute and complicated, which nobody expected after the Council. It is almost as if the Church were attacking itself. We looked forward to a flowering, a serene expansion of conceptions which matured in the great sessions of the Council. But (...) one must notice above all the sorrowful aspect. It is as if the Church were destroying herself. »»

Pope Paul VI's sermon during the Mass for Sts. Peter and Paul, on the occasion of the anniversary of his coronation, he for the first time mentioned the smoke of Satan. In a May 15, 2008 interview at the Italian website called Petrus, Cardinal Vergilio Noe, Paul VI's Chief Liturgist and Master of Ceremonies, stated that the Pope was specifically referring herein to the Novus Ordo Mass :

«« We have the impression that through some cracks in the wall the smoke of Satan (fumus Satanae) has entered the temple of God: it is doubt, uncertainty, questioning, dissatisfaction, confrontation (...) We thought that after the Council a day of sunshine would have dawned for the history of the Church. What dawned, instead, was a day of clouds and storms, of darkness, of searching and uncertainties.

During his General Audience on November 15 1972 he told:

«« Don't be surprised at our answer and don't write it off as simplistic or even superstitious: one of the Church's greatest needs is to be defended against the evil we call the Devil. »»

There is also his address of October 13 1977 on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the Fatima apparitions:

«« The tail of the devil is functioning in the disintegration of the Catholic world. The darkness of Satan has entered and spread throughout the Catholic Church even to its summit. Apostasy, the loss of the faith, is spreading throughout the world and into the highest levels within the Church. »»

Bella Dodd, who held a senior position in the American Communist Party and was baptized in 1952, claimed that the Communist Party placed its agents in seminaries, confirming the testimony of Douglas Hyde, another Communist Party defector. Bella

127) “The Reform of the Roman Liturgy: Its Problems and Background” (translated from the French edition of 1992) by Monsignor Klaus Gamber - Roman Catholic Books, USA # 1993 (p. 100). Published in German in 1981.

Dodd told her friend Professor Alice von Hildebrand, the respected Jewish-born Roman Catholic theologian, that while she was working for the party, she liaised with four cardinals within the Vatican who were accomplices to Communism. She also told:

«« “In the 1930s we put 1100 men into the priesthood in order to destroy the Church from within. The idea was for these men to be ordained and progress to positions of influence and authority as monsignors and bishops.” A dozen years before Vatican II she stated that they had attained the highest places in the Church, and also that the changes would be so drastic that in the near future the Catholic Church would have become unrecognizable. »» (“Christian Order Magazine” Nov. 2000)

This immense perversity turned out to be following a plan much older than Communism itself! In the years following the French Revolution, “Le Grand Orient de France”, the oldest French Masonic obedience and the largest in continental Europe, hatched the plan to infiltrate and corrupt the Roman Catholic Church from within. This Lodge did so under the pseudonym of “Alta Vendita” (Supreme Auction House), and therefore this plan is known also as the Permanent Instruction of the Alta Vendita, being distributed among the lodges in 1820. How that took shape is stated in the article by the undersigned “Christ Hides under the Threadbare Cloth”.

The Alta Vendita’s instruction is a broad plan to undermine the Church through the very ministers of the Roman Catholic faith, a long-term project that reached its apex in the period after World War II. The Council of the sixties and what followed was a weighty phase in it. Since the middle of the nineteenth century, thousands of traitors have entered the seminaries and have been ordained to the priesthood, forming a sufficient reservoir from which a number of cardinals and professors would emerge, and finally even a pope, so that the dirty work could take shape at all levels, and of course also in the seminars. The instruction shows the diabolical strategy of infiltrating the Church and mobilizing its bona fide members after first corrupting them with freethinker ideals. Thus, well-meaning Catholics would be taken in tow and help propagate Masonic ideals under the apparent legitimacy of Catholicism. The strange phenomenon occurs that many act out of inner conviction, unaware of a conspiracy. The Instruction contains among other things:

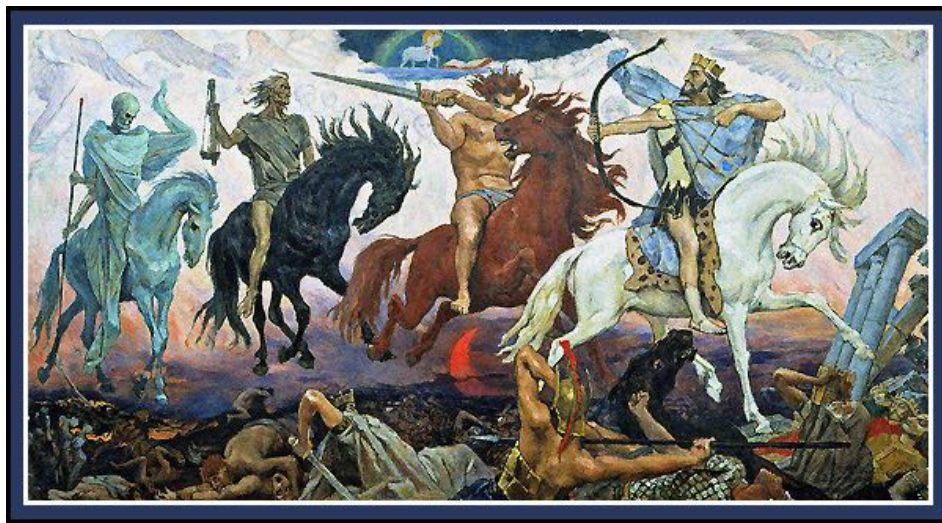
«« You wish to revolutionize Italy? Find the right Pope whose contours have been drawn by us. (...) Let the naive clergy march under your banner in the belief that they are still marching under the banner of the Apostolic Keys. You wish to annihilate the last vestige of [papal] tyranny and oppression? Cast your nets like a Simon Bar-Jonah [the Apostle Peter]. Lay them in the depths of sacristies, seminaries, and monasteries, rather than in the depths of the sea, [meaning that the sworn enemies of God must infiltrate as priests, professors and monks.] (...) You will gather yourself as friends around the Apostolic See [after having ascended to the rank of bishop or cardinal.] A revolution is being preached here with the [papal] tiara and the cope, marching under the Cross and the banner. »»

21.99 – The ‘End of the Times’ Theology is based on a Misunderstanding

Although I am in full agreement with the statement that Christian doctrine, as always taught by the Church, must be taught again and with modern means, I dare to differ with the Pope’s statement that our times are comparable to the past – since that is, in fact, what he said in his opening speech. There is an error of thinking hidden here that is separate from the treasure of faith that everyone must believe in. It concerns the distinction between ‘eschatology’, or the theology of the end of the times (‘eschatos’ is Greek for ‘end’ or ‘final’), and ‘apocalypics’, or the theology of the Last Judgment (‘apocalypse’ means ‘revelation’, and refers to the Book of Revelation). The former relates mainly to

the Kingdom of Peace while the latter is involved with disaster. John XXIII stated several times that he was not sympathetic towards theologians: *"They ensured that there was dispute, whereas the Church needed carers of souls."* What the Church Fathers have left behind, says Benedict XVI – and he has wide knowledge of the church fathers – is the presentation of a rounded-off whole. In this vein divine revelation is completed, though often still in hidden terms. After a long maturation process, when a dogma is proclaimed, it merely confirms what has long been known, but thus far has not been so formulated, with the consequence that following the proclamation of the particular dogma the faithful may no longer doubt its truth.

Since the function of the Church, according to the usual interpretation, is to bring peace on earth, which follows the eight beatitudes (Mt. 5:9), and that this is a task that will only be completed at the end, eschatology feels at home within the established order, while apocalypics is seen as an attack on it. I quote from a book by Mark Heirman: ¹²⁸⁾



The Four Horses of the Apocalypse by Viktor Vasnetsov (1887)

«« Apocalypics is mostly rejected by the Roman Catholic Church (...) Eschatology is essentially conservative and bound up with privilege and power. Apocalypics is revolutionary and belongs to the world of those without rights or power, those who in this world have nothing to lose but their chains. In this sense eschatology is the objective ally of the established order and at least of compromise. Apocalypics is the sworn enemy of the established order and wishes to come to no compromises at all. Hence apocalypics and ‘parousia’ ¹²⁹⁾ had the upper hand for as long as Christianity was still a small sect in a world populated by Jews, Greeks and Romans. It was not until the fourth century – when Christianity was given to the entire Empire – that apocalypics had to give way to eschatology, that made things easier for the established Roman Catholic Church that was quickly getting more powerful. Apocalypics was banned to the realm of heretics and the outcast. »»

The controversy between apocalypics and eschatology is to be regretted – because it is far from the truth. The Catechism of the Catholic Church clearly states, under the heading “Hope of the New Heaven and the New Earth” (articles 1042-1050), that the apocalyptic expectation should be a joyful one. It says that the revelation affirms the

128) “Apokalyptische Tijden” (Apocalyptic Times), by Mark Heirman, Publ. Houtekiet - Antwerp, 1999 (p. 149).

129) Parousia means “appearance, arrival, entry” and indicates the Second Coming.

profound common destiny of the material world and Man, to which should be entertained an eager longing; even creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay! Here follows the full text:

«« At the end of time, the Kingdom of God will come in its fullness. After the universal judgment, the righteous will reign for ever with Christ, glorified in body and soul. The universe itself will be renewed: *“The Church (...) will only receive her perfection in the glory of heaven, when will have come the time of the renewal of all things. At that time, together with the human race, the universe itself, which is so closely related to Man and which attains its destiny through him, will be perfectly re-established in Christ.”* (Lumen Gentium 48) Sacred Scripture calls this mysterious renewal, which will transform humanity and the world, *“new heavens and a new earth”*. (Rev. 21:1, 2 Pet. 3:13) It will be the definitive realization of God’s plan to *“gather together under a single head all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth.”* (Eph. 1:10) In this new universe, the heavenly Jerusalem, God will have his dwelling among men. *“He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away.”* (Rev. 21:4) For Man, this consummation (of the old) will be the final realization of the unity of the human race, which God willed from creation and of which the pilgrim Church existed in *“the nature of a sacrament”*. (LG 1) Those who are united with Christ will form the community of the redeemed, *“the holy city”* of God: *“the Bride of the Lamb.”* (Rev. 21:2-10) She will not be wounded any longer by sin, stains, self-love, that destroy or wound the earthly community. The beatific vision, in which God opens Himself in an inexhaustible way to the elect, will be the ever-flowing well-spring of happiness, peace, and mutual communion. For the cosmos, revelation affirms the profound common destiny of the material world and Man: *“For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God (...) in hope because the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay. (...) We know that the whole creation has been groaning in travail together until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.”* (Rom. 8:19-23) **The visible universe, then, is itself destined to be transformed, “so that the world itself, restored to its original state, facing no further obstacles, should be at the service of the just”, sharing their glorification in the risen Jesus Christ.** (Irenaeus: Adv. Haeres. 5:32:1) ***“We know neither the moment of the consummation of the (old) earth and (its) Man, nor the way in which the universe will be transformed; the form of this world, distorted by sin, is passing away. And we are taught that God is preparing a new dwelling and a new earth in which righteousness dwells, in which happiness will fill and surpass all the desires of peace arising in the hearts of men.”*** (Gaudium et Spes 39:11)

“Far from diminishing our concern to develop this earth, the expectancy of a new earth should spur us on, for it is here that the body of a new human family grows, foreshadowing in some way the age which is to come. That is why, although we must be careful to distinguish earthly progress clearly from the increase of the Kingdom of Christ, such progress is of vital concern to the Kingdom of God, insofar as it can contribute to the better ordering of human society.” (GS 39:2) *“When we have spread on earth the fruits of our nature and our enterprise (...) according to the command of the Lord and in his Spirit, we will find them once again, cleansed this time from the stain of sin, illuminated and transfigured, when (the moment has arrived) that Christ presents to his Father an eternal and universal kingdom.”* (GS 39:3) God will then be *“all in all”* in eternal life. (1 Cor. 5:28) True and subsistent life consists in this: the Father, through the Son and in the Holy Spirit, is pouring out his heavenly gifts on all things without

exception. Thanks to his mercy, we too, men that we are, have received the inalienable promise of eternal life. »»»

Apocalypticism therefore does not have to be an ideology of disaster. It fits seamlessly with the notion of the Kingdom of Peace here on earth. In fact both notions deal with the same concept, but the theologians, whom John XXIII so disliked, have put us on the wrong footing. The clash of opinions, which has lasted the entire history of the Church, is based on an obstinate misunderstanding. Let me explain. God's plan for the restoration of Adam's descendants - meaning us - is divided into chapters. We are now in the evangelical times and are on our way to a new and glorious chapter in God's salvation plan for this world, in agreement with the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19-20 :

«« [After his resurrection] Jesus came [to his eleven disciples] and spoke to them: *"All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you. And lo, I am with you always, even to the 'end' of the age."* »»»

The word 'end' is the rendering of the Greek 'sunteleia', which indicates an entire completion and not a cutting-off. The end of times, which seems to inspire so much panic, is therefore not the end of 'time' but the end of an 'era'. The evil ones, those who really are of bad will, the conspirators, are the ones who should really fear, for they will be shattered as potter's vessels. (Ps. 2:9, Rev. 2:27) Finally, and here I agree, the Last Judgment 'will' come but not yet, for first Satan and his henchmen ought to be chained permanently (Rev. 20:10), something that only will happen definitely 'after' the establishment of the Millennium Reign of Peace. (Rev. 20:2-9) Before the Millennium Reign he will be temporarily chained. Incidentally the term 'last Judgment' does not figure in the Bible.

21.100 – After 1840 God has 'not' kept Silent

God's work of redemption passes through a number of chapters or periods before it is completed. A theological word for chapter is 'dispensation'. Dispensation is a term used in the King James and New King James versions (in 1 Cor. 9:17, Eph. 1:10; 3:2 and Col. 1:25). It was taken over by the Roman Catholic Douay-Rheims Bible (1582), which still is the Bible of choice of traditionalist Catholics. The Catholic New American Bible (NAB - 1970) uses the word 'stewardship' instead. 'Dispensation' translates 'oikonomia', a word derived from 'oikos' (house) plus the verb 'nemein' (distribute, administer), sometimes rendered as 'stewardship', as in the parable of the unjust steward. (Luke 16) In the Roman Church, people use the term of the Economy of Salvation or the Divine Economy, to express a form of dispensation. Not so much, however, to indicate the final salvation of our world that would first have to pass by a number of stations; its use foremost deals with God's work of creation in the perspective of the management of our world as it exists 'now'. Nonetheless, the Bible clearly demonstrates that God divides human history into periods. In fact, He defines time in terms of hours, months, years. So, it is hardly surprising that God proceeds by a division in phases that each time come to an end, announced with words like: *"...the harvest of the earth is ripe"*. (Rev. 14:15) God's partitioning plan is called dispensationalism, an expression to be associated with a conservative Protestant approach. How God partitions is something about which theologians strongly disagree, but this does not mean that the concept is wrong.

How are we to know that the end of our dispensation is close at hand? Will God not want to prepare his people, as He did when the Messiah was soon to be born? The prophet Daniel, in the ninth chapter of his book, predicted that 69 weeks would pass, or 69 x 7 = 483 years, from the start of the rebuilding of the temple to the time of the Messiah. It so

happens that this corresponded to the coming of Jesus. And there were more signs, such as the three Magi who asked King Herod where the prophesied Messiah could be found. Their arrival in Jerusalem must have been the talk of the town.

And other peoples, even the Aztecs, were prepared by God for the things that were to come. The conquest of the Aztec Empire (Mexico) at the beginning of the sixteenth century was preceded by the appearance of a great comet; apocalyptic storms raged over the land and, in inexplicable ways, the Temple of the cruel god Tezcatlipoca went up in flames; the most important sign was the rising from the dead of Montezuma's sister Papantzin, four days after she had been buried, to warn the ruler of the coming collapse of his empire; the conquistador Cortez, who was driven by missionary zeal, set foot on land in the year, the month and on the day predicted by the oracle...

Händel's Messiah in Hebrew

An exciting development in the revival of the Jewish people is the translation of and accompaniment to Händel's Messiah in Hebrew by David Loden. He is a member of a Messianic Congregation in Israel that has the aim of preparing the Congregation of Yeshua for His return. A pilot production of the oratorio was performed in the spring of 2006. He says: "The Jewish people have always loved Händel's Messiah. Every time it is performed in Israel, which is yearly, Jewish people are part of the audience – they love it. But the Hebrew performance was historic. The Hebrew fits like a glove with Händel's music. And what this does is to take the music out of the box of being strictly art. It now becomes an intelligible witness to the Lord. (...) There is a 'Sacred Music Festival' every year in Israel which is extremely well-attended. (...) Imagine that this music is sung in the Hebrew tongue and listeners suddenly hear their own Scriptures not only sung but expositied – just think of the possibilities! It becomes a tool for really sharing the life of the Messiah. And that is our deepest desire – for people to really hear the music and the message of The Messiah. »»

From "Jews for Jesus" newsletter / Dec. 2007

Taking all of this into consideration, God will not do otherwise in our times. He will not be reined in when the day dawns. An important sign is the foundation of the State of Israel in 1948, an event that calls to mind the prediction made by Jesus in Luke 21:29-32: *"Look at the fig tree [symbol of Israel], and all the trees. When they are already budding, you see and know for yourselves (...) that the kingdom of God is near. (...) This generation will by no means pass away till all things take place."* There is the prophecy of Rabbi Judah Hai Alkalai (1798-1878), who identified 1840 with the budding of the Messianic Age, and this he continued to proclaim despite great opposition.

Something is going on. Definitely. Over the whole world there were in 2018 at least a half million messianic Jews, thus Jews who believe in Christ, and the movement is gaining momentum. The largest organisation then in this field was "Jews for Jesus" with 55 branches world-wide. Something is going on. Undeniably. The most recent event that speaks to the imagination is something I would like to share with you. It so happened that just before his death, one of Israel's most prominent rabbis wrote an encrypted name of the Messiah on a small note (in acronym), which he requested should remain sealed until April 30, 2007. When the note was opened, it revealed what many have known for centuries: **"Yehoshua (Yeshua or Jesus) is the Messiah"**.

It is extremely interesting that Rabbi Yitzchak Kaduri uses the form 'Jehoshua' for the expected Messiah, since this name in Hebrew uses the letter 'shin' (our 's') in the middle of the 'unutterable Name', the so-called 'tetragrammaton', as follows: yod, he, **shin**, he,

waw. The unutterable Name is generally expressed by the Jews as Elohim or Adonai (in both cases 'Lord') or as Hashem (the NAME). In Biblical translations the tetragrammaton is sometimes rendered as Yahweh and generally rendered as 'Lord'. By using Jehoshua for the Jewish Messiah, Kaduri in fact indicates the divine nature of Jesus. The agreement between Jesus and the 'Jehoshua', living in God's bosom, was always understood by the learned rabbis. Why otherwise would the Sanhedrin have forbidden the use of the name of Jesus, for Him whom they later wished to crucify? In fact, the name 'Jesus' was a very common first name among the Jews (but not written with the shin in the full tetragrammaton). Even Barabbas, that great criminal who was released instead of Jeus, was so called. According to Matthew 26:71, Jesus Christ was allowed to be referred to as 'Jesus the Nazorean'. Probably to pester the Jews, Pilate explicitly called Him "*Jesus, who is called the Christ*" (Christ is Greek for messiah). (Mt. 27:17-18)

A few months before Rabbi Yitzchak Kaduri, known as the "Senior Cabbalist Elder", died at the age of 105 in the first month of 2006, he surprised his followers when he told them that he had met the Messiah. Kaduri gave the message in his synagogue on the feast of Yom Kippur, teaching the congregation how to recognise the Messiah. He also mentioned that the Messiah would appear to Israel after Ariel Sharon's death. The former Prime Minister was in a coma since January 4, 2006 and died in January 2014. Kaduri's son David confirmed that in his last year his father dreamed and talked almost exclusively about the Messiah and his coming. "*My father has met the Messiah in a vision*" he said, "*and told us that He would come soon.*" Kaduri was not only highly esteemed because of his advanced age. Chief rabbis looked up to him as a 'tsadik', a righteous man or saint. Thousands visited him for counsel and healing. His followers speak of many miracles and his students say that he predicted many disasters. Police closed off the Jerusalem streets for his funeral, which became one of the largest ever in a city known for large funerals. According to the newspaper Arutz-Sheva more than 300,000 joined the procession to pay their respects as he was taken to his final resting place. "*When He comes, the Messiah will rescue Jerusalem from foreign religions that want to rule the city*", Kaduri once said. "*They will not succeed for they will fight against one another.*"

There are also other signs. Since the olive tree is the first of all trees to show green, image of the spiritual budding of the Jewish people, it means that the mission of the herald taking on the role of John the Baptist, but now preaching for the whole world, only started after 1840, after the date of the beginning of the Messianic Age. "*When you see the Precursor, it can be said that the mission of ha-Yeshua Mashiach has begun!*", states an old Jewish saying. Who is the messenger other than the Virgin Mary? The growing series of announcements telling of the end of time – think of Lourdes, Fatima and so many others – are all in the spirit of "convert, for the kingdom of God is at hand". These series of announcements started in 1846 with Mary's apparitions to the shepherds of La Salette. Thus the Mother of God is the herald sent to prepare the new era. This is - isn't it? - the one meant by the prophet Isaiah when he said (Is. 40:3): "*The voice of one crying in the wilderness: make straight the ways of the Lord.*" A person has been sent by God, and her name is Mary. She comes as a witness so that all may believe through her. She is not the Light, but comes to witness of the Light.

For example, there are the apparitions of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary in the Blessed Garden (Giardion Benedetto) of Contrada Santa Teresa in Brindisi, Italy. On April 10, 2016, she spoke the following, confirming that she is the John the Baptist of our time:

«« Dear friends, following the Blessed Virgin is a comfort to her, tormented by the lack of faith and even more by the lack of love. We are in times of spiritual darkening, times when man has replaced God with disorder and severe rebellion for his eternal Word of Truth. Let's commit ourselves to anchoring more to the guidelines of the Queen of Heaven, honoring her with the Holy Rosary, and

incorporating in our heart her words of life. The messages will be 'a little sun' for everyone who welcomes them and contemplates them daily. The Blessed Virgin does not ask for the impossible, she simply asks to live a Christian life, to go the way of good, and practice the virtues in order to become happy with her on earth. Our Lord is revealed by the Holy Mother, so it is important to believe and follow the Immaculate, our spiritual 'educator'. »»»

When we look closely at the revelations of the Augustinian nun, the venerable A. K. Emmerick in combination with "Mary, the Gate of Heaven" by Consuelo, a Spanish housewife, which first appeared in 1990, then it appears that John's mission consisted of two parts. The first played itself out in the 'desert of Judea'. I now quote from Emmerick:

««« Now for him has Judea become the desert and, as before he dwelt in the desert with springs, rocks, trees and all animals, lived and spoke with them, so he speaks now with men and sinners, with no thought for himself. (...) Ever permeated with his mission, aware of his responsibility, serious, severe, simple and zealous, he proclaims but a single message: Penance! Prepare yourselves! Salvation is at hand, the Saviour comes! »»»

It was only after Jesus had allowed Himself to be baptised that the second part of John's mission started to unfold in all the land surrounding the Jordan, where he preached and where he also administered a baptism of conversion from sin. It is precisely this explanation of the significance of the desert that is pointed at by Isaiah when he announces the voice of one crying in the wilderness, and it is in this way that the Blessed Virgin Mary fulfils her calling, now no longer limited simply to the region of Judea but comprising the entire world, for all people are her children, including those who have not yet found God, yeah, even those who despise Him.

Consuela received via revelations a Biblical catechesis from Mary Mother of God as a gift for the Marian year of 1987-88. As stated on the backcover:

««« This book opens for us "*a door to hope*" and reveals the high mission of the Virgin Mary. Her hands hold "*the keys to heaven*". For Mary is indeed the "*Gate of Heaven*", as determined by God's will. In fact, "*if the Lord has chosen the way through Mary to come into the world, the return of humanity to Jesus will also be through Mary*", who is "*the Mother of the Divine Mercy*" and "*Tabernacle of God and Gate of Heaven.*" »»»

It is sufficiently known that there have been many apparitions of the most Holy Virgin Mary, and there are even some of Jesus. Among these apparitions, doubtless, there are a number that are false, not always easy to recognize as such. The imitator brooks no reins. But you need not be concerned. God will tell us what is false in his own good time. We should not pull out the chaff, because then we will pull out the wheat too. The good grain might be pulled out together with it! God Himself, the Lord of the harvest, will do the weeding and that just before the moment to harvest, so at the gates of the Reign of Peace. (Mt. 13:29-30) We humans must keep our distance. It is not for us to judge appearances, for we can be wrong, and even if our understanding is correct, we can shake people who first believed fervently. A priest once asked my opinion of a particular apparition and I answered in the negative, but added immediately: "*Above all, take no account of my opinion.*" On a public forum, however, I will never denounce apparitions or visions.

And certainly in the last few years there have also been many apparitions outside the Roman Catholic world, and there are many private revelations, especially in the Islamic world, through which striking conversions have taken place. By way of illustration and to close this article I would like to give a characteristic example of an occurrence in Indo-

nesia. Not so much an apparition of Mary but of the Son. The account is taken from bedevaartweb (pilgrimage web), a Dutch website that is presented in five languages.

It concerns a remarkable apparition that is little known, remarkable because it was a Christian phenomenon that occurred in an overwhelmingly Islamic country and, strangely enough, in and around the house of a Muslim. In the Jakarta neighbourhood of Kramath Lima a Christian church was being renovated. In the night of 22nd December 2000 a building worker saw the figure of a man. He thought it was an evil spirit and asked for a winning lottery number so that he could gamble. The next day he became ill. His two friends, who were sitting next to him, told the church warden. After hearing their description of the figure, the warden showed them an image of Jesus. The two confirmed that it looked like what they had seen. Ten days later the story continued. Not far from there a certain Ajum was at home occupied in Islamic prayer. There appeared a somewhat vague face on the wall. Because others, including a Christian minister, saw the same thing, it was decided to paint over the wall, but the image – resembling Jesus – kept returning. Within a week a stream of inquisitive visitors came. Even the international media (CNN) was there. The mullah (Islamic minister of religion) was consulted. When he stood before the image he called out: *“If you really are Jesus, prove it to me with a sign.”* And then it seemed as if the image was attempting to come out of the wall. The mullah was so shocked at this that he fainted. Later he stated that this was ‘the prophet’ Jesus (Jesus is regarded as a prophet within Islam). The number of visitors had reached more than 10,000 thanks to the publicity. The local population took advantage of the happening and set up stands selling food in front of the house. One of these, a man selling chicken stew, to his great surprise was able to ladle out many more times the usual number of meals.

The authorities were unhappy with all the commotion and closed Anjum’s house to the public on 12th January. Anjum himself moved to Bogor, outside the city. From that moment the image appeared no longer inside the house but at the same place on the outside wall, even after the wall had been painted blue. In the night of 14th to 15th January, in the presence of many witnesses, the figure drew itself out of the wall and rose into the clouds until out of sight. This happened at around half past midnight. Since then the cult has died a slow death. The authorities got what they wanted, but the population has not forgotten...

What follows concerns recent end-time prophecies. On November 8, 2010, an ordinary Irish woman who was not practicing the faith, received the first message from a major series called The Book of Truth, given to her by Jesus who revealed Himself to her. She presents herself under the pseudonym of “Mary Divine Mercy” (in short MDM). Jesus says that this is a new and supplementary revelation, and elsewhere that this is the last series of divine messages to be given to the world before his return, as foretold. The main theme is the Millennial Reign of Peace, which according to one of the messages will last literally a thousand years. The announced Warning, also known as the “Illumination of Conscience”, when everyone without exception will see themselves in God’s eyes, is intended to bring as many individuals as possible on the right path and to enormously increase the number that will get access to the Millennial Reign of Peace.

Some are annoyed that there are supplementary revelations. That would go against the doctrine of the Church, which is reaffirmed in the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC): *“No new public revelation is to be expected before the glorious manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ. (...) Christian faith cannot accept ‘revelations’ that claim to surpass or correct the Revelation of which Christ is the fulfilment.”* (CCC 66-67) Indeed, I subscribe that no truly new revelations are to be expected before the glorious appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ. Well, we are now living in the time of the glorious reappearance of our Lord Jesus Christ, preaching the Gospel of his second and festive entrance through

MDM. Evangely or gospel, is from the Latin 'evangelium' or Greek 'εὐαγγέλιον' (evangelion), literally good tidings, was originally the announcement, shortly before, of the entrance of the Roman Emperor in some town or region, so that an appropriate welcome could be prepared. (Bellum 4:11:5 §656) So, I see no conflict here with what is stated in the CCC. After all, the epiphany is imminent. The Book of Truth addresses this theme:

«« Just like nations who welcome royalty, much preparation will be needed before the king lays foot on their lands. You would never allow a visiting king to arrive when everything is in disarray, decay or where streets are lined with filth. Representatives of such countries will, therefore, ensure that they are dressed and prepared properly to meet the visiting dignitaries. They will have gone to considerable trouble to prepare a great welcome and they will have chosen representatives, who they deem to be worthy, to welcome the visiting king. Finally, they will prepare a great ceremony to celebrate the arrival of the king and on the great day will line the streets and sing great praise. They will lavish accolades upon the visiting monarch and his entourage. So will it be on the Great Day of the Lord, when I, Jesus Christ, come to judge. »» (May 13th, 2014)

The name evangelion for our four Gospels originated from the expectation among early Christians that Christ's return was right around the corner, as is abundantly clear from Paul's letters. The first time that evangelion appears is in Matthew 4:23: "*Thereafter, Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the Gospel (evangelion) of the Kingdom [of God on earth].*" The Reign of Peace could arrive at any time, it was thought. So it is appropriate, two thousand years later, for another Gospel-message to be delivered, for Christ's return is at hand – also in human terms. We are therefore talking about a kind of fifth Gospel, the author of which is not one of the four apostles, but none other than our beloved Lord and Saviour, Jesus himself. By the way, Jesus does not call it a gospel but the Book of Truth, to remind us of the truths we already knew or could have known. (cf. message May 20th, 2013)

The wheat and the chaff

The chaff or weeds, as most Bibles refer to it, is a translation of 'zinzanion', a particular kind of weed, the dolik (*Lolium temulentum*). At the start of the season it looks remarkably like wheat, but must not be pulled up even when found because its roots spread horizontally and would thus pull up the wheat too. At the end of the season, when the ears of wheat bend under their own weight, the dolik is easily recognised (no heavy ears) and it stands upright and can thus be cut. The dolik was a feared plague in the Palestinian wheatfields. Sowing and spreading it (as an act of revenge) was punishable under Roman law. In our gardens we have a plant known as the Sabina officinalis. You can find it among strawberry plants. When the young leaves come out both plants look exactly the same. If even a small portion of the sabina's root remains behind, it will grow back again! The following from the Book of Truth fits in nicely with this:



Lolium temulentum

«« He, the most Loving of all Fathers, is in great pain, at this moment, and He is deeply hurt by the darkness He witnesses in the souls of many of his children. It won't be long before the final phase of the purification of the human race begins. This will mean the separation of the good from the wicked. How this will break My Father's Heart, but it must be done. It is like as if He is preparing his garden, so that it is healthy and perfect. The weeds must be destroyed or they will spread and infest the healthy crops. Be prepared at all times. — Your Jesus »» (Febr. 3rd 2013)

APPENDIX 13

The Marian apparitions of 1830

Do not count

Message in the Book of Truth of February 12th 2014 by our beloved mother, the Mother of Salvation: *“My role is to prepare you for the Great Day of my Son’s Second Coming. I intend to continue to call out to my children, until that Day arrives.”* Therefore, the messenger of our end times in the power and function of John the Baptist – repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand! – is now the Virgin Mary, through a myriad series of apparitions around the world and to many blessed, a series that began in 1846. Some would rather designate 1830 as the beginning in that function, the year that Mary appeared several times to a sister of the Daughters of Charity, the 24-year-old Cathérine Labouré, under the title “Mary-Immaculate Conception”. That happened in the Rue du Bac in Paris. Of course, those apparitions cannot be viewed in isolation from the end time and the coming reign, which was already coming close. In my opinion, the weight of the Rue du Bac’s apparitions was foremost centered on the dogmatic constitutions around Mary and it was not under the sign of evangelism, although Mary never appears without a call to prayer and conversion, or else she would not fulfill her maternal obligation. The distribution of the ‘miraculous medal’, as the medals were soon called, and which were made by Catherine Labouré on instruction of the Blessed Virgin, promoted the religious devotion. And indeed the Dogma of Mary Immaculate Conception was promulgated by the Church on December 8, 1854, as the final chapter of a long and fruitful thinking proces.

In 1858 the Blessed Virgin appeared in Lourdes to the girl Bernadette. The Mother of God then did not introduce herself as the Immaculate Conceived Virgin, but said: *“I am the Immaculate Conception!”* That was a step further than what she had said to Catherine. Although Mary confirmed the dogma of four years earlier, this immediately created a new theological problem. How could Mary call herself ‘the’ Immaculate Conception? She was not God, was she? Saint Father Maximilian Kolbe, who was murdered in nazi-Auschwitz, comments:

«« The Immaculate Conception is divine! Not Mary, but the Holy Spirit. The third person of God, eternally received from the love between the Father and the Son, is the uncreated Immaculate Conception. Mary, on the other hand, is the created Immaculate Conception. So there are two Immaculate Conceptions.

The Holy Spirit dwells in Mary’s soul from the very beginning, throughout her life, and through all eternity. He, the eternal Immaculate Conception, immaculately produces in her divine life, makes her the created Immaculate Conception. And

the virgin womb of Mary's body is kept holy and unblemished for Him, who she will receive in time, which is the human life of the God-man [after all, all what is human is placed somewhere in the time].

And if a wife takes the name of her husband, because [in a sense] she belongs to him, is one with him, and becomes equal to Him, the source of the new life, then even more would not Mary be positioned to use the Name of the Holy Spirit, the Divine Immaculate Conception, of Him who lives in her as the uncreated Love? »»

More than twenty years later, Pope Paul VI will embrace Maximilian Kolbe's theology and beatify him in 1971. Pope John Paul II canonized him eleven years later.

Besides this title, the Blessed Virgin Mary is also known as Advocate, Auxiliatrix, Adjutrix, and Mediatrix of all graces, about which the Second Vatican Council made statements in *Lumen Gentium*. (nrs 60-65) There is also the title Co-Redemptrix, which the official magisterium kept at bay in order not to jeopardize ecumenism, a scandalum! *) Yet, that is the logical conclusion of her immaculate status. As early as the seventeenth century, her function as Co-redemptrix was highlighted by the Blessed Mary of Agreda. However, the fact remains that the Blessed Virgin Mary is subsidiary to Christ in everything.

According to a revelation to JNSR, we are still awaiting the confirmation of the dogma of 'Mary Divine Immaculate Conception', which is related to the coming deification of humankind in the sense of being totally in God's Will, which shall come to maturation during the Reign of Peace. If Christ has become man and God's children are one in Jesus Christ, who is God, should we then be surprised that we humans, and his mother in the first place, are deified (which is quite different from being God)?

*) In the message of the Book of Truth of Nov. 10th 2013, the following is given by our beloved mother, the Mother of Salvation:

«« My role as Co-Redemptrix means that my power against the devil has been strengthened, in a way that has not been granted to me by God before. So now is the time when all devotion to me will be carefully dismissed, by the enemies of my Son. When veneration to me is rushed through and when the request to safeguard countries against Communism is twisted, then my wishes will not have been carried out. I will, from now on, be a rarity in the official patronage normally afforded me, the Mother of God, in my Son's Churches on Earth. My power against the beast will be avoided by the removal of my image, my Holy Rosary and other devotions to me from many Catholic Churches. »»

The Oral & Written Law

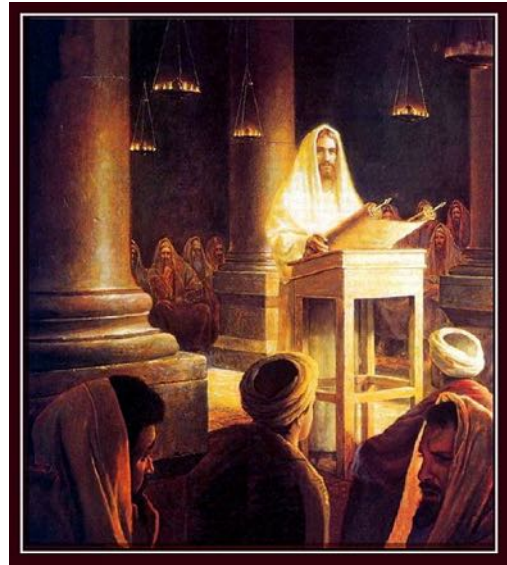


Another name for the oral law is 'tradition'. There is the tradition about the books that should belong to the Bible. And there is the hermeneutical tradition that deals with the meaning of what has been written. There is also a broad tradition that also includes traditions without confirmation in the Holy Scriptures themselves. Take the preparation of the Catholic liturgical ointment that goes back to the Last Supper. The book of hymns is also tradition. Finally, there is an oral tradition without a solid foundation. For example, Stephen, the first Christian martyr, is said to have been buried in the garden of Rabban Gamalael. Here I limit myself to the canonicity of Scripture and some thoughts on hermeneutics, otherwise all the books in the world would be insufficient to discuss all. The latest Christian tradition should never contradict the older tradition, which usually envisions the tradition as it existed from the beginning of Christianity. A fortiori, it should never contradict the true Judaic tradition. So, to know the true Judaic tradition is to know the Christian tradition!

22.101 – The Canonicity of the Sacred Books

Hermeneutics is the explanation of the Holy Scriptures, but before starting that exercise, it must first be established what exactly the Scriptures are, to be acceptable as 'Word of God' in the sense as if He is speaking to me personally. First, then, the canonicity (i.e. belonging to Scripture) of the books available to us must be agreed upon and the original text thereof with all permissible variants. That is also tradition. If a variant exists for a particular phrase or verse, it should be mentioned in a good Bible. But there is no case where a known variant would compromise the deposit of faith. So, that's not something to worry about. Regarding the canonicity of the major books, there is little difference of opinion among the different Christian faiths, despite the complicated genesis of the Bible, especially that of the Old Testament. It would go too far, in view of our topic, to delve into that further.

As for the first five Old Testament books, known as the Pentateuch or the Torah, and the prophetic books, including the Book of Revelation (the last book of the Bible), the tradition is unanimous as far as canonicity is concerned. The Book of Daniel, which is hermeneutically on the same level as the Book of John (Book of Revelation) is a different story. Because only after Christ did the Jews throw them out of the canon, in my opinion because the calculation in verses 9:24-26 points too clearly to the date of birth of Christ. In this regard, I agree with the Christian tradition, which does accept Daniel as canonical. What recent scientists say about this does not impress me, for the simple reason that an old established tradition, such as this, is not open to revision. The distance in time is the most reliable certainty for this, although they use it as a counter-argument. The accumulated treasure of faith should not be tampered with under the guise and in the name of a 'higher' understanding, certainly not for such an essential cause. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and with the help of God's grace, the people of God accept the truth as revealed by God. And although Christians have crossed swords on many points, there is a remarkable unanimity about the canon, and that also applies to the less evident part of the New Testament (evident with regard to canonicity), as it is recorded in the historical books, think of Acts and the Gospels. Alternatives to the Gospels appear to have existed in the first century, but these have been lost. Again, what the modern theologians concoct, I don't care.¹³⁰⁾ Then there are the New Testament letters. Fortunately, there is little disagreement among Christians about their canonicity.



As for the New Testament canon, it gradually took shape. The recognition of the apostolic writings as an authoritative and complete instrument was initially hesitant. Many years passed before it was believed that the words of someone who talks to people are really God's words. Famous Brooke Foss Westcott comments about this in his book on the sources of the New Testament:¹³¹⁾

«« The successors of the Apostles did not recognise that the written histories of the Lord and the scattered epistles of his first disciples would form a sure and sufficient source and test of doctrine for later times when the tradition would have grown indistinct or corrupt. Conscious of a life in the Christian body, and realising the power of its Head, they did not feel that the Apostles were providentially charged to express once for all in their writings the essential forms of Christianity, in like manner as the Prophets that had foreshadowed them. »»

22.102 – *Lex orandi, Lex credendi*

There is no conclusive proof that the Bible is God's Word, any more than it can be 'proven' that God exists. For me the clearest evidence is the fact that the Bible, which has been recorded over an enormous period of time by authors from completely different backgrounds and cultures, nevertheless forms an organic whole and can be read as one

130) See my book "The Bible, Word of God", in particular appendix 3.

131) Seventh and last revised edition of 1896 of "A General Survey of the History of the Canon of the New Testament" (p. 56), first edition 1855.

book, as if all its parts were written by one author, by who else but God? Together with the Emmaus disciples I say: *“Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?”* (Luke 24:32) That shows another sign by which I know for myself that I am not erring in the acceptance of Scripture as the Word of God. The Jews call this burning the Simchat Torah or ‘joy of the law’. I have never been able to find any mistakes with regard to the historical aspect either. We can study the Bible from its historicity and cultural context to show that the Bible is a truly unique collection, with which it can be made plausible on scientific grounds that the Bible is the ‘Word of God’. Historical verification is extremely important because, unlike many other religions, such as Buddhism, Biblical historical ‘facts’ have a meaning that makes our belief stand or fail. The most important truth of faith is that the Bible is the ‘Word of God’, his Most Holy Word. As soon as that is questioned, everything collapses like a house of cards. It is for this reason that God’s enemies focus precisely on that in a supposedly scientific jargon. It should be realised that any uncertain transmission of the text brings the prophetic content of the Bible into disrepute. The core question is: does God speak through the Bible or not?

The official doctrine can never deny nor contradict itself

“Doctrine, that has been definitively proclaimed, cannot be changed either in the sense of denying or contradicting what has been taught, or by asserting something that raises doubts for such a truth”, said Father George Woodall, professor of moral theology at the Pontifical Regina Apostolorum Athenaeum in Rome. *“If there were to be an authentic development of doctrine”,* Woodall said, *“this would neither entail nor imply any of these violations, but would deepen some particular point of prior doctrine, maintaining that doctrine intact.”* Those who suggest such doctrinal development must first show that whatever they propose does not violate this principle and is thus compatible with constant definitive doctrine.

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There are mathematical tools that provide evidence for the Bible as Word of God. The best known is the ‘Bible Code’. There is also the ‘Panin Bible Statistics’. Suppose one sees these approaches as conclusive proof of the divine origin of the Bible, it still means little if it affects only the intellectual part of his being.¹³²⁾ The way to God always goes through the heart to the intellect, which opens itself up to God’s promptings through the inspiration of our heart. God reveals Himself through the Holy Spirit to our spirit which challenges the human mind through the heart. In Biblical parlance the heart is the organ of a person that serves to make of him a thinking, perceiving, willing and affectionate being, bringing together the ideas of knowledge, understanding, will and desire. The Hebrew uses of the word heart are more or less comparable to the way we use the word ‘mind’ in English.¹³³⁾ Thus the intellect (a faculty of the soul working through and with the brain) is subservient to the human mind and heart, and not the other way around.

Only after having finished this article the writer understood the true relationship between the heart and the mind. We are brainwashed that the mind rules our actions. But nothing could be further from the truth. Our mind is the servant of the heart, which means that one cannot be brought to an essentially different opinion on the basis of rational arguments alone. The discussion between creationists and evolutionists is an example of this.

132) The conclusion is not surprising that a person cannot be brought to faith solely on the basis of the special mathematical properties of the Bible. Why then did God create that structure? This can be compared to the watermark of a banknote. After the payment method has in principle been accepted, the watermark serves to obtain total certainty that this is indeed a real banknote.

I have never heard of an evolutionist who was brought to other thoughts by a creationist or vice versa, because the issue at stake goes much deeper. In politics too it often goes much deeper and that is why such absurd laws are passed under the guise of rational arguments. After all, the heart has its reasons which reason knows not. (Blaise Pascal) It is also the case that once a 'miracle' becomes a mere intellectual argument, this achieves nothing in terms of persuasiveness unless a certain conviction already existed, and that explains why the hard-hearted cannot be moved, even not by a miracle. (Mt. 13:58) Put differently: One might convince someone against his will, yet the will remains unchanged.

We may therefore say that the Christian life does not begin with knowing something about a truth or an important doctrine as if it is pure intellectual knowledge, but it begins with an exhortation of the heart after the human spirit has opened up to communion with God's Spirit. In other words, this means that our attitude to life and faith confirms faith, or on the contrary damages it. Even if we believe that an expression of faith comes from an understanding, it is first of all the indwelling of God's Spirit that nourishes this expression of faith, often by simply drawing our attention to something, so that we can start thinking about it. In the natural order, the things precede ideas, and in the supernatural, the divine mystery - the reality of God - precedes faith, which is the answer to the individual being existentially challenged. In other words, a person sees what he believes and not the other way around, a principle with far-reaching consequences. This explains why Jesus did not perform miracles when the spectators were totally lacking in faith. The Nazis did not see a human being when they saw a Jew but a piece of vermin that had to be destroyed, because their sunken opinions preceded their observation.

Well, it is this principle that has led to all the rituals and devotions in the Catholic Church as summed up in the expression 'lex orandi, lex credendi' or in short 'ora ut credas', which loosely translated means 'pray first, then believe'. In theology the phrase is to be understood that it is in the worship of the community that the beliefs are expressed and that in itself this kind of worship gives it a form of authority. The principle is that the group of the faithful through a certain practice underpins the faith, without having to argue: "This is why we do what we do." This mechanism provided a measure for developing the Creeds, the canon of Scripture and other doctrinal matters. In the Early Church there was a praxis before there was a common creed and an officially sanctioned canon. However, the ritual expression of the church community could only be embedded in the general 'tradition' when anchored in a time-honoured practice that was not just a local phenomenon. Like Vincentius of Lerins (†445) teaches in his "Commonitorium" (ch. 2):

«« In the Catholic Church itself all possible care must be taken that we hold that faith which has been believed everywhere, always, by all (quod semper, ubique et

133) The Hebrew term 'heart' in its figurative sense is the most important Biblical term for the inner person. It views the inner person from a number of angles, of which of concern here is its reference to the thought or will of human beings. Typically the heart is the organ of understanding. Thus, 'heart', or 'to set the heart', means to make up one's mind or to decide (2 Chron. 12:14, Neh. 4:6). 'Calling to mind' is as such expressed in Deuteronomy 30:1, Isaiah 46:8, 65:17 and also Jeremiah 3:16. 'Recalling' is similar (Deut. 30:1, Jer. 51:50, Ezek. 38:10). Wisdom and understanding are located in the heart (1 Kings 3:12, Prov. 16:23) and perceived with the heart (Prov. 18:15, 22:17; Eccl. 1:1, 8:16). Moreover, it is the heart that plans or decides to act (Prov. 16:1, 16:9). God's 'mind' is sometimes described this way (Jer. 19:5, 32:35, 44:21). Decisions of an ethical nature take place in the heart (Gen. 20:5, Job 11:13). This being the case, evil will also be manifested in the heart, where decisions to disobey and rebel take place (Jer. 17:9). A heart, or the mind, can be perverted and therefore incapable of apprehending truth and wisdom (Prov. 10:20, 11:20, 12:8, 17:16, 17:20). The heart is also the place where disappointment is being coped with. (Is. 44:20). (Source: Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology, under Mind/Reason).

ab omnibus creditum). For that is truly and in the strictest sense Catholic, which, as the name itself and the reason of the thing declare, comprehends all universally. This rule we shall observe if we follow ‘universality’, ‘antiquity’, ‘consent’. We shall follow universality if we confess that one faith to be true, which the whole Church throughout the world confesses; antiquity, if we in no wise depart from those interpretations which it is manifest and were notoriously held by our holy ancestors and fathers; consent, in like manner, if in antiquity itself we adhere to the consentient definitions and determinations of all, or at the least of almost all priests and doctors. »»»

If true that a prophet is not well received in his own country, it is equally true that he/she is not well received in his/her own age. This observation gave the theological framework for establishing the Catholic doctrine in Papal decrees, which actually began with the apostles Peter and Paul, the first one representing the inspired high priestly authority and the second the theological foundation of the New Covenant. The New Testament tradition begins with them, as at the time with the duumvirate of Moses and Aaron. At the feast of Saints Peter and Paul, the prayer goes as follows in the collecta (first prayer) of the Tridentine Mass: *“O God, who hast made this day holy by the martyrdom of thine Apostles Peter and Paul: grant that thy Church may in all things follow the precepts of those through whom she received the beginnings of the extension of the faith.”* It does not say “the last extension of the faith”. This means that the “quod semper, ubique et ab omnibus creditum” should not be considered absolute, because then God’s plan throughout the ages would be muzzled, which was the sad mistake of Jewish prelatism at the time of Jesus. They thought to have the treasure of truth in everything. But even the knowledge of the Holy Apostolic and Catholic Church is in part, is gradually being deepened and must be corrected if so required, such as the disastrous view that the Millennium should not be taken literally, as well as the foolish view that never again there will arise a prophet in the Old Testament tradition; these are views, not dogmas, as contained in Denzinger, which is the book containing all the original sources (papal decrees, adhortations, etc.) of Catholic doctrine, and it thus constitutes the ultimate handbook of Christian faith and morality.

The task of Rome has always been to legitimize, in collegial cooperation, including councils, a practice or belief as a tradition pleasing to God, of something long-standing. That long-standing tradition originated in God’s mind. Even a person, when writing something down, has it in his mind before he entrusts the letters to the paper. If asked about the meaning of a particular text, the author will be able to explain it further, because what he wrote existed in the mind already.¹³⁴⁾ And that is the core of the oral tradition. The oral tradition therefore precedes the written one; there can never be any contradiction between the two; there can never be any contradiction between the later and the former, not even between the interpretation of the New and the Old Testament. And because God had all future times in mind before giving us the Bible, beginning with the Pentateuch, the Bible includes all times to come and is therefore always up to date. Stubborn dogmatism kills what God has in mind for us, *“for the letter is dead, but the spirit gives life.”* (2 Cor. 3:6)

In an extreme reaction to Protestantism, which relies almost entirely on the Bible, the erroneous view has crept in that Catholic doctrine is superior to the Bible, when it should have been that the Bible and the Doctrine complement each other. After all, how could the Teaching be superior to the Bible that is the letter-perfect Word of God? They are complementary and must complement each other because, according to 2 Peter 1:20-21, the Bible does not allow for unauthorized interpretation (i.e., without the prompting of the Holy Spirit). The official dogmas of the Catholic Church are infallible, but that does not alter the fact that teachings exist on minor points that are more or less certain depending on the subject. There is much virgin territory in the theological field where extreme

thinking can be viewed as a sin of arrogance, especially when used as a sieve to silence God's living prophets.

Outside of collegial cooperation, the pope has often made dogmatic statements or acted as a judge on the basis of his primacy, that is, his own power, to settle theological disputes or to limit a discussion. The legitimation of a tradition must of course be substantiated theologically and rationally and must always fit within the already established dogmatics. Moreover, it must be traceable to what the Holy Scriptures say. The First Vatican Council teaches (ch. 4/169 1st Const.): "*The Holy Spirit was not promised to the successors of Peter that by His revelation they might make known new doctrine, but that by His assistance they might inviolably keep and faithfully expound the revelation or deposit of faith delivered through the Apostles.*" The term "*expound faithfully*" indicates that ecclesiastical doctrines, called dogmas, do not add to pre-existing doctrine, but provide a deeper insight into what already exists. Here too we have to beware of obstinate opinions. For example, no one until the very recent past has suggested that the Babylon of the Book of Revelation represents the entire human civilization residing in the city called Earth, but it would be wrong to condemn this view on the basis of its recency.

The official acceptance of a devotion within the Church was certainly not automatic, for there are many instances where a certain popular devotion has been condemned. That a practice is a 'living devotion', adhered to by a great many people is not in itself proof of its legitimacy. Consider the Roman Church's severe condemnation of flagellantism in which the power of self-flagellation manifested itself, which, within the so-called Holy Church, can be regarded as one of the worst perversions to have occurred there. 'Pious' self-flagellation with blood flowing was no exception. Flagellants, also called Scourge Brothers, or Brothers of the Cross, were Catholic fanatics who roamed the country in 'pious' processions, in the 13th to 15th centuries, seeking to enforce God's mercy with self-chastisement. The followers were noted for including public flagellation with up to ten thousand strong groups marching across the plains and through the cities, although sometimes they were refused entry by the authorities. This devotion did not have a central doctrine or overall leaders, but mass hysteria, as its expression, and occurred all over Europe in separate outbreaks. In the early-onset, the Catholic Church tolerated the Flagellants and then monks and priests joined in. But after 1300 the Kerk became less and less tolerant, being alarmed by the rapid spread of the movement and its excesses. Pope Clement VI condemned the flagellants in a Bull in 1349 and admonished Church leaders to suppress them. This position was reinforced 23 years later by Gregory XI, who associated it with other heretical groups. And then, in 1417, the Council of Constance sharply condemned the movement.

When it comes to tradition, the most important is that of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass in which Jesus Christ, Son of God, is truly and in reality present in the guise of bread and wine. The Bible does not elaborate on this in detail and the doctrine of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is therefore rejected by the Protestants, also because according to them, it goes against common sense. However, this tradition was foretold. Psalm 136, called the Great Hallel (great psalm of praise), is often and enthusiastically sung in

134) What we are unquestionably aware of is a constant movement towards immateriality, a process of metamorphosis from the phonetic into the spiritual, from language (phonetic vibrations) to thought, which goes in both directions. Jean Paulhan describes this transmutation: "Metamorphosis by which words are no longer accessible to our senses and lose their weight, their noise, and their lines, their space - to become thoughts. But thought, for its part, renounces - to become words - its speed or slowness, its surprise, its invisibility, its time and our inner awareness of it." This simultaneous transformation in contrary direction, adds Merleau-Ponty, is 'le mystère du langage'. [And as words can be an imperfect expression of elusive thought, so can thoughts be an imperfect expression of elusive words.] From "After Babel" by George Steiner # 1998 (p.129).

Judaism because of its simple rhythm. By punctuating the third Hebrew word in verse 25 (the punctuation is optional), the translation becomes: *“He [Yahweh] gives all nations the bread that is flesh.”* Here, Mosché the Preacher refers to Psalm 34:9,¹³⁵⁾ quoted in 1 Peter 2:3: *“Having tasted the sweetness of the Lord.”* And Mosché comments: *“Taste and see how good Yahweh is. For the bread that He gives to all is his own flesh. And while the taste heralds bread, it has turned into meat.”* This is not just any psalm. This Psalm represents the delights of the soul and can only be fully enjoyed by devout and grateful hearts. The song begins with a threefold praise to the Holy Trinity. Then, in six verses, there is a praise for the six-day’s work of creation, followed by six others for the deliverance from Egypt, an image of the deliverance from the demonic domination of God’s creative work. Seven verses follow about the Exodus through the desert on the way to the Promised Land. Humanity is now in the seventh (re)-creation day; the Exodus wanderings are a picture of that day. It ends with two verses of personal thanks for the kindnesses received. And then comes the apotheosis with the veiled announcement of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass that evokes never-ending praise. It is no coincidence that this Psalm consists of 26 verses, for that is the numerical value of Yahweh, God’s Holy Name, who resides in his fullness in the consecrated Holy Host.

The 1969 Novus Ordo Missae (New Misorder or the NOM), formulated on the instructions of the Second Vatican Council, did not meet the outlined state of affairs, seeking a completion of a dogma that meets current needs. It was not a logical consequence of the council decisions and did not correspond to an established practice or belief. It was decreed from above and did not meet the requirement of an organic development (a slow and harmonious build-up over time). The New Misorder was said to be the elaboration of the conciliar decree of December 4, 1963 under the name “Constitution on Sacred Liturgy (Sacrosanctum Concilium)”. This aimed at a more active participation of the faithful during Holy Mass, which was a commendable goal, because at that time this was hardly the case. However, the elaboration of the constitution was of a completely different caliber and did not bother at all with the guidelines formulated therein. As early as 1965 on the basis of the Sacrosanctum Concilium, a recommendation for Holy Mass was published, which was up to the norm, but it did not last long because it lacked an active introduction into the Church herself, and we do not have to guess why that recommendation was received lukewarm by the rebellious authorities.

What the First Vatican Council (1870) says about the tradition

The doctrine of the faith, which God has revealed, has not been proposed to human intelligences to be perfected by them as if it were a philosophical system, but as a divine deposit entrusted to the Spouse of Christ to be faithfully guarded and infallibly interpreted. Hence the sense, too, of the sacred dogmas is that which our Holy Mother the Church has once declared, nor is this sense ever to be abandoned on plea or pretext of a more profound comprehension of the truth. Let intelligence and science and wisdom, therefore, increase and progress abundantly and vigorously in individuals and in the masses, in the believer and in the whole Church, throughout the ages and the centuries – but only in its own kind, that is, according to the same dogma, the same sense, the same acceptance.

Constitution Dei Filius (I, 4:22)

¹³⁵⁾ The writings of Moshje the Preacher (Mosché Ha-Darshan of Narbonne) have been lost, but are known in part thanks to the frequent quotations. Le Chevalier Drach quotes a number of his sayings, including his Hebrew commentary on Psalm 136:25, taken from Raymond Martin’s “Pugio fidei” and Peter Galatinus’s “Arcana catholicae veritatis”. Mosché Ha-Darshan owes his reputation mainly to the fact that, together with Tobiah ben Eliezer, he was the most prominent representative of the symbolic exegesis (derash) in the 11th century.

“The Novus Ordo represents both as a whole, and in its details, a striking departure from the Catholic theology of the Mass as it was formulated in Session 22 of the Council of Trent [in the year 1562]. The ‘canons’ of the rite definitively fixed at that time provided an insurmountable barrier to any heresy directed against the integrity of the Mystery.” With these words, Cardinal Ottaviani, Emeritus Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, and Cardinal Bacci, editor-in-chief of Pope John XXIII’s encyclical “*Veterum sapientia*”, addressed Pope Paul VI on Sept. 3, 1969, and presented him with the “*Breve Esame Critico del Novus Ordo Missæ pro Manuscripto*” (short scrutiny of the NOM), a few weeks after it came into effect. This commentary was made public on the occasion of the Year of the Eucharist (Oct. 2004 - Oct. 2005).

How these changes were incorporated is exemplified by Pope Benedict XVI, then the Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, in his foreword to the French translation of 1992 of Klaus Gamber’s book: “The reform of the Roman Liturgy”. Surprisingly, the foreword was refused and went as follows: *“I also went through that initial period. I am speaking from experience, since I too lived through that period with all its hopes and its confusion. And I have seen how arbitrary deformations of the liturgy caused deep pain to individuals totally rooted in the faith of the Church.”*¹³⁶⁾ This comment ties in with what he noted at the turn of the millennium in the “Spirit of Liturgy”: *“Anyone who nowadays advocates the continuing existence of the old Latin liturgy or takes part in it, is treated like a leper; all tolerance ends here. There has never been anything like this in history; in doing this we are despising and proscribing the Church’s whole past.”*

It is precisely this principle of the traditional transmission, or oral tradition, that the sixteenth century reformers took offense. The NOM is therefore also referred to as a ‘reformational breach’. In the eyes of the Reformation, the original instructions at the Last Supper (the thursday before Crucifixion) regarding the rules of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass – which are not recorded in the Gospels – and the subsequent popular devotion and ritualism of early Christendom, cannot be normative! Not all that Christ taught is recorded, especially the teachings that were intended solely for the apostles and their descendants in the priesthood, and this is logical and explainable. In their denunciation of the Church of Rome, they had no choice but to reject the ordained priesthood and therefore the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the most precious gift of God to mankind.

The paradigm of the Reformation movements (Continental and Anglosaxon) about the essence of the tradition is the great divide between Protestantism and Rome. While the Reformation openly distanced itself from the *lex orandi* principle, it could not do so completely, for otherwise they could not have adhered to Scripture as the infallible Word of God. Its books have been gradually accepted by the Christian community as an integral part of the sacred canon. God speaks to his people in many ways and has never failed to do so, but these specific books have in a special way received from Him the seal of absolute reliability, and according to the undersigned, even every letter is divinely inspired. They are the manna that came down from Heaven and must be harvested and eaten every day or else it loses its beneficial effect. I would like to add that in consequence of its by God given vitality, Scripture conveys its own heartrending message irrespective of its readers, so that Roman Catholics can marvel at the great Biblical insights of men of Protestant denominations and likewise Protestants can marvel at the great insights of men of a Roman Catholic background.

The conviction of the Continental Reformation movement on this issue was as follows. Rather than regarding ‘tradition’ as something above or beneath Scripture or parallel to

136) This unpublished preface is in the archive of Una Voce America with which Benedict had good connections. The quote is from their summer issue 2013 (N° 48) in an article by editor-in-chief Bill Basile: “A Tribute to Pope Benedict XVI”.

it, the founding theologians (Luther, Melancton, Calvin, Zwingli, and others) considered Scripture the culmination and supreme expression of the church's divinely communicated tradition. Councils and creeds recognized as authoritative are therefore interpreted only as defining and more fully explicating the orthodox faith handed over to the apostles and as such found in Scripture, without anything being added in both spirit and substance. Remarkable in this respect is that the *Confessio Augustana* (from 1530), which summarizes the Lutheran creed, fully accepts the Nicean-Constantinople decrees, and curses (anathema) each and everyone who opposes them.

The situation is somewhat different within the Anglican Church. There the *lex orandi* principle belongs to the character itself of this movement. They explicitly refer this to the authority and interpretation of the Scriptures. It is hardly a coincidence, then, that Westcott – with his pioneering work for the final determination of the Greek original – was an Anglican bishop. The position of the Continental Reformation is that the tradition of the faith (a tradition therefore in the narrow sense) is subject to Scripture, whereas the English Church affirms that tradition of the faith is equal to Scripture, which implies that the institutional church possesses total control over what it considers to be the orthodox doctrine. But, as already explained, the oral tradition precedes the written, and is therefore superior to the written, to be understood in such a way that they are mutually consistent and never contradict each other, never will, never, ever will.

The Council of Nicaea was convened by Constantine the Great in 325 and is known as the first ecumenical or general council of the Christian Church. Twelve years earlier, Constantine the Great and Roman emperor Flavius Licinius jointly issued the Edict of Milan, which removed penalties for professing Christianity and pledged to return confiscated Church property. From then on the Christian religion and its practices were benevolently allowed. However, it neither made paganism illegal nor made Christianity the state religion; these were later actions of the Byzantine Emperor Theodosius I. It was not until 391 that Theodosius declared the Christian faith as the only legitimate imperial religion, ending state support for the other religions. It is at that date that many Protestants place the birth of the Roman Catholic Church, who, in their view, made common cause with the political rulers. The Protestants, to indicate that this caused the rupture, say that Siricius (384-399), then reigning, was the first bishop of Rome to call himself Pope and to take the title of 'Pontifex Maximus',¹³⁷⁾ but both claims do not prove that the Pope was a usurper.

The Protestants do not see a continuity as from the birth of the Church at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4), which persisted in an unbroken line after the foundation of the institutionalised Roman Church in 391. They see what happened in 391 as a clear breach with the old practice based on Biblical teachings. As if the Roman Church does not follow Biblical teachings! The Roman Church would have since become a state institution and not a divine institution directly directed by Christ. In the sixteenth century, therefore, the reformers decided to accept the two oecumenical councils that were held before the year 391. The third one was in 431, but that one did not include the Eastern Churches as did the two first oecumenical councils.

22.103 – Some thoughts on Jewish Hermeneutics

The original Hebrew has been put into a kind of cipher because of the vowel gaps. Along with the handing over of the Scriptures, Moses also heard how it should be read and understood. Without the vowel application, as established in the second half of the first millennium AD, the text is only legible if one knows what it says. So, the hermeneutic

¹³⁷⁾ The title Pontifex Maximus was used as a title for the Roman emperors until 381 and that was the year that Emperor Gratian officially renounced it.

tradition begins with Moses. During his 40 days' stay Moses was instructed on the Horeb. That is why we say he received the double law. The oral 'law' is a vital element. Without it the prophetic testimony cannot be properly understood, even for such simple things as the 'totafot' prescribed in Deuteronomy 11:18 (small box with a text to be bound upon the head during prayer). Likewise the 40 days, in which Jesus instructed his disciples, served as an 'oral law'. They are called the oral law, not because it would always have been transmitted orally, but to indicate that the written and oral law form together a whole. We could also define it as the instruction for an understanding of the Biblical context, with which we can discover the underlying intentions of the divine author, for the present but also for new future conditions.

Jewish tradition professes that the first five Bible books have far greater authority than the others because, again according to tradition, they were written by Moses himself (his own death on Nebo would have been told by someone else). Yet the borderline between the oral and written tradition is not as distinct as often pretended. As for the genesis of the world, the Paradise story and the beginning of the patriarchal events, Moses, too, must have reverted to a tradition that, since the art of writing still had to be invented, must have been oral. The tradition known to the patriarchs – Noah, Abraham, Joseph and others – functioned as an inspiration from God and was treated on the same level as Scripture now. However, the writing down of it by Moses, at least the relevant part, was done under God's direction. For the Levitical priesthood respect for the oral tradition has always been as great as for the Word itself, because much of what the Scriptures say is unclear and even seems contradictory – and isn't that also true of the New Testament? Thus word and explanation are mutually dependent on each other. The much later Talmud (recorded well after Christ), which contains the result of an oral tradition, is said, according to some texts, to be even more important than Scripture itself, but based on historical considerations and the many conflicting opinions in the Talmud itself (a form of discussion), this is untenable. That myth is convenient to keep the people in check.

The Jewish oral law was known at the time as Masorete (derived from the word fetter), which concerns the practice of handing down from memory from one generation to another. That should have functioned for certain period in that form, but not as extreme as people want us to believe. Now everything falls under Masora: the written word, customs, history. I have respect for the oral tradition (later written down), though not as much as for the unfolding Word, i.e. the explanation of the Bible in the Bible itself. Yet, knowledge of the Old Testament and the Judaic tradition is essential, although the latter must be approached with the required caution, because it is not all gold that glitters. According to Masora, Hebrew is bound and unfolding, but it is not unfolded by the supposedly scientific method of 'Critical Bible Analysis' that questions divine inspiration, but instead by adding to an existing core - always keeping faithful to the old tradition and expanding it with deeper insight. This means that the old tradition is as valid as the newest development and provides a good test for new insights. The problem is that the old knowledge has not come to us undamaged. Unfortunately much has been lost along the way and many additions have been made that have nothing to do with the tradition or inspired knowledge, but are rather personal opinions.

The basic assumption remains that the Bible is not suited to self-opiniated interpretation (2 Pet. 1:20) and may only be approached in faith and with awe. And even then! In the past, when someone made an official visit to the Japanese emperor, the first sentence of the account always started with: *"Trembling and full of trepidation..."* So it should be with the Bible, but unfortunately, worldly princes are often more in awe than the Bible.



The Ordinance against Tractatus Theologico Politicus

On the next page is a translation of the 17th century Ordinance by the Dutch government against Tractatus Theologico Politicus, which is a Socinian book.

Socinianism, or Rosicrucianism, is at the root of Freemasonry. After its followers were chased from Poland in 1660 under penalty of death, they went to Holland. At a later stage only, they went to London. In Holland they recruited a number of eager adepts, amongst whom Spinoza.

In July 1674 Dutch government published the ordinance condemning the Socinian books, Leviathan (by Thomas Hobbes), and other harmful books, and in particular Tractatus Theologico Politicus, written by Spinoza. Although he might not have been a devil worshipper, the highest Socinians certainly were. Anyhow, Spinoza felt at ease with them.

Benedict Spinoza (excommunicated by Judaism) anonymously published the Tractatus in 1670 under the auspices of the most powerful man then in Holland, the Councillor Pensionary Johan De Witt. It was at first well-received, but following De Witt's assassination by a lynch mob in 1672, political support for the treatise waned. In it, Spinoza put forth his most systematic critique of Judaism and organized religion in general. He rejected the belief that there were such things as prophecy and the supernatural. He argued that God acts solely by the physical laws of his own 'nature' and he categorically rejected that God could have any purpose in mind.

In the long run, Tractatus proved of decisive influence for the direction of Biblical research that tries to destroy the divine authority of Holy Scripture, a form in vogue today and known as Modern Biblical Criticism (MBC).

A contemporary of Spinoza, who outlived him by 35 years, was the priest Richard Simon, who at the end of his life was head of the Rosicrucian movement. He was fond to call himself a Spinozist. He defended the Tractatus and poured scorn on everyone who dared to criticize it. Simon's epoch making book "Histoire critique du Nouveau Testament" (Critical History of the New Testament) was written in the vein of the Tractatus and was printed in 1678, one year after Spinoza's death. By a decree of the Royal Council of France the whole production of 1,300 books was seized and destroyed, but one copy survived and was soon reprinted in Amsterdam. Both Spinoza and Simon are called the fathers of the MBC, which attests to a blasphemous persuasion. The MBC does not merit the name of science.

***Edict of the Hof of Holland
Against the Socinian Books,
Leviathan and others.***

Dated 19th July 1674

Source: Groot Placaet Boeck (in J. Scheltus, 's Graven Hage, 1683, 3rd part - p. 523, from Pollock's bk. XII:444, app. B.) That of June 25, 1678, condemning the Opera Posthuma, is to be found at p. 525 of the same book. I am indebted to Nynke Leistra's translation from the ancient Dutch.

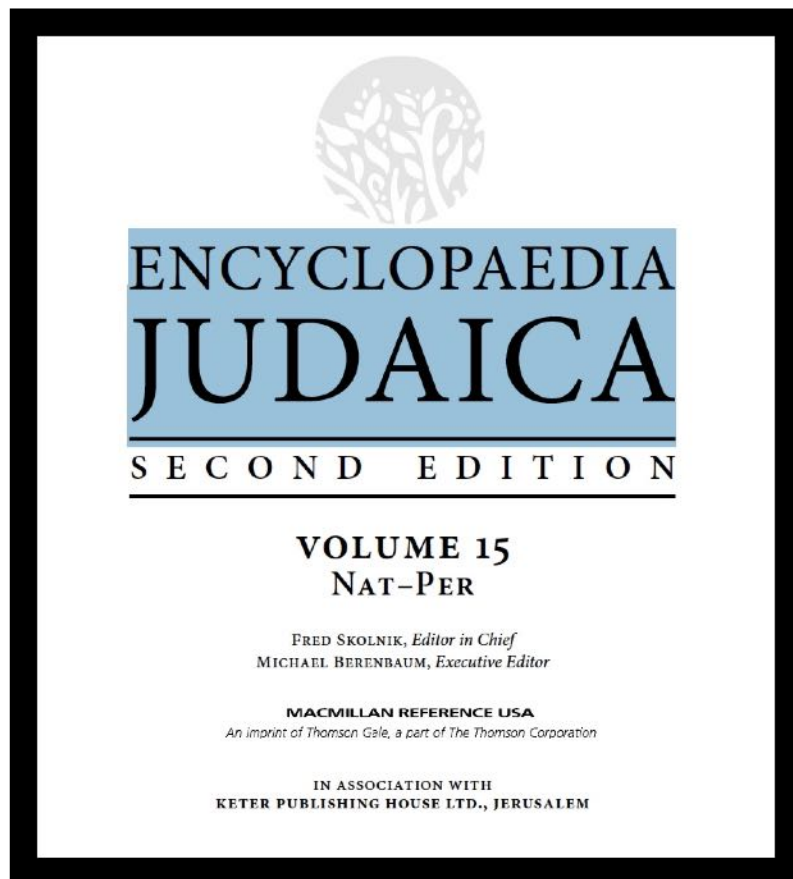
The ordinance of the States General and of the States of Holland and West-Friesland, and of the States of Zeeland, condemning Spinoza's Tractatus Theologico Politicus

Willem Hendrik, by the grace of God Prince of Orange and Nassau, Count of Catzenellenbogen, Vianden, Diest, Lingen, Moers, Buren, Leerdam, etc... And the President and Councils of Holland and West-Friesland: Having learned that for some time several Socinian and other harmful books have been published by way of printing and are still daily being spread and sold, as there are the books entitled Leviathan, Bibliotheca Fratrum Polonorum, quos unitarios vocant, Philosophia Sacrae Scripturae interpres, and also Tractatus Theologico-Politicus, and finding, after examination of the contents of these that they not only deny the Doctrine of the true Christian Reformed Religion, but also abound with all calumnies against God and his Qualities and his Trinity worthy of admiration, against the Divinity of Jesus Christ and his Atonement, and also [against] the fundamental main tenets of the said True Christian Religion, and that they, in effect, try as much as they can to render the authority of the Scriptures contemptible and attempt to confuse weak and unstable minds, all directly against repeatedly issued Resolutions and Edicts of the Country [prohibiting this], Thus, in order to restrain this harmful poison and in order to prevent as much as possible that anybody shall be misled by this, we have judged it our duty to declare the said books to be as we deemed aforesaid, and to condemn them as blasphemous books, pernicious to the soul, full of unfounded and dangerous propositions and abominations, detrimental to the True Religion and divine Worship. Therefore we herewith as yet prohibit each and everyone to print, to spread or to sell these or similar books on auctions or otherwise, under penalty of the Edicts of the Country and especially that of September 19th 1653 which has been issued to this end. We order anyone whom it may concern, to comply with this [edict], and that this [edict] will be published and posted up everywhere where it should be and is customary in similar matters.

Given under the Seal of [the] Judiciary stamped below on July 19th 1674.

Beneath [that] it said: In my presence.

Signed: Ad. Pots. Bk.XIB:198-1



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ORAL LAW (Heb. תּוֹרָה שֶׁבִּעַל־פֶּה): This is the authoritative interpretation of the Written Law [Torah, which is the text of the first five Bible books, the Pentateuch] which was regarded as given to Moses on Sinai, and therefore coexistent with the Written Law. This view of the Oral Law was a fundamental principle of the rabbis. The Written and Oral Laws constitute together “two that are one”. “It is related that a certain man stood before Shammai and said: ‘Rabbi, how many Torahs have you?’ The rabbi replied: ‘Two - one written and one oral’.” (ARN 15, 61; cf. Sif. Deut. 351) There is a strong and close bond between the Written Law and the Oral Law, and neither can exist without the other – both from the dogmatic point of view and from that of historical reality. The Oral Law depends upon the Written Law, but at the same time, say the rabbis, it is clear that there can be no real existence for the Written Law without the Oral. The need for the positing of the existence of the Oral Law is inherent in the very character and nature of the Torah. The statutes of the Written Law could not have been fulfilled literally even in the generation in which they were given, since “that which is plain in the Torah is obscure, all the more that which is obscure” (Judah Halevi, Kuzari, 3, 35; cf. Moses of Coucy in Semag, introduction: “For the verses contradict and refute each other”, and “the statements in the Written Law are vague”). Even those statutes of the Torah that appear to be clearly formulated and detailed contain more that is obscure and requires explanation than what is manifest and understandable. The reasons given for this are many and various. The Written Law contains contradictions (e.g. Deut. 16:3-4, 16:8), because there is a lack of clarity and definition: The law “he shall surely be put to death” (Ex. 21:12 et al.) does not state whether by stoning, burning, or some other method not mentioned in the Torah. “Ye shall afflict your souls” (Lev. 16:31) does not indicate whether it means

by mortification of the body through ascetic practices, by fasting, or in some other manner. The prohibition against doing work on the Sabbath does not specify the nature of work (see below). “And if men strive together and hurt a woman with child so that her fruit depart and yet no harm follows... But if any harm follow...” (Ex. 21:22-23) does not make it clear whether the ‘harm’ refers to the woman or her embryo. Dimensions and quantities are not given, e.g., in the precepts of *leket*, *shikhḥah*, and *pe’ah*, or *terumah* (the priestly portion), etc. Individual laws are given without any indication of whether the law is confined to that particular case or whether it is to be regarded merely as an example of a category of laws, e.g., the law that a slave goes free if his master destroys his eye or his tooth. (Ex. 21:26-27)

There are lacunae, and laws which are not explicitly stated but to which mere passing reference is made. For instance the only reference to the laws of sale and acquisition is the prohibition against overreaching - *ona’ah*; there is no reference to the laws of marriage, while the law of divorce is mentioned only incidentally in connection with the injunction that a man may not remarry his divorced wife after she has remarried and become divorced again (Deut. 24:1-4); the Torah enjoins that one sentenced to be flogged may not have more than the fixed number of lashes inflicted (Deut. 25:1-3), but nowhere does it specify which transgressions involve the punishment of a flogging. From the above it seems clear that it was impossible for life to be regulated solely in accordance with the Written Law (“and I should like someone to adjudicate between two litigants on the basis of the weekly portions, *Mishpatim* [Ex. 21-24] and *Ki Teze* [Deut. 21:10-25:19]” - Judah Halevi, *Kuzari* 3:35). It may even be inferred from the Written Law itself that immediately after it was given there already was difficulty in understanding it. Thus, it is apparent that until he heard it explicitly from God, Moses did not know what the penalty was for the transgression of gathering wood on the Sabbath (Num. 15:32-35; cf. *Sif. Zut.* 15:34: “*Eliezar b. Simeon* says: Moses did not know that that person was liable to death, nor did he know how he should be executed, as can be inferred from the reply given: ‘And the Lord said unto Moses: this man shall be put to death’, for he is liable to death; how shall he put to death? He [God] replied: by stoning”; which fits the case of the blasphemer in *Leviticus* 24:10-23). As stated above, the Pentateuch has no definition of what constitutes work in connection with the Sabbath or Day of Atonement, only some of the things forbidden being explicitly mentioned like plowing, reaping and kindling fire. Furthermore, in connection with the desecration of the Sabbath, in one and the same verse (Ex. 31:14) two different punishments are given – punishment by death (by human hand) and *kareth* (dying by God’s hand like not being able to live beyond sixty years). From the point of view of its judicial literary form, the Written Law is in fact no different from other early Oriental statutes that were never exhaustive or aimed at exhausting all the details of the laws given.

If the statutes of the Torah could not be properly understood in the generation in which it was given, how much less could it be understood by the later generations? In addition to this it was a fundamental doctrine of the scribes that the Torah was given by God for all time, that it would never be exchanged for another Torah and certainly never rescinded, and that it provided for all possible circumstances that might arise at any time in the future. Nevertheless, in practice, changing conditions – on the social, economic and other plane – raised many new problems, as well as the question to find satisfactory solutions in accordance with the Torah. The new situations and spheres of human activity which arose, for which the Written Law did not provide, could not be ignored. From the very beginning the Written Law was the basis of authority for the Oral Law of the future. (Deut. 17:8-11) Yet, it can be regarded as a historical fact that the Oral Law did not come into being after the Written Law was given, and that it is correct to say that the Written

and Oral Laws were given together to Moses at Mount Sinai. It may even be maintained that the Oral Law anticipated the Written Law, **as the Oral Law not only assumed the observance of the Written Law at its inception, but also its future observance by means of its continuing development, known as the unfolding of the Oral Law that once, of course, would be put in writing. This effect can only derive from the previous existence of the Oral Law (in the Mind of God), as otherwise the Written Law would not a priori allow for its proper development. Thus we can say that the Written Law is a summary of the Oral Law, and therefore both are consistent and can never contradict each other.** Furthermore, since the Written Law relies - by allusion or its silence - on statutes, customs, and basic laws, which are not explicitly mentioned in it (marriage, divorce, business), these omissions are ipso facto part of the Oral Law and this too was bound to develop along preordained paths. [The part in bold has been amended by Hubert Luns]

The impossibility of the Written Law existing without an Oral Law is underlined by the history of the Jewish people. The development of the Oral Law can be traced outside the Pentateuch throughout the books of the Bible, especially in the prophets and the hagiographa [all other Bible books except the annals], in the Jewish literature of the time of the Second Temple [apocrypha and pseudo-epigrapha, in Jewish Hellenistic literature, and in the early targums], the talmudic as well as the rabbinical literature throughout the generations. Even the dissenting sects outside normative Judaism, as long as they did not abandon Judaism completely, did not maintain the Written Law without an Oral Law: the Sadducees possessed a "Book of Decrees" – who were to be stoned or burnt, who beheaded, and who strangled [the scholium to Megillat Ta'anit]; the Judean desert sect developed, especially by means of exegesis, a extremely ramified halakhah [bylaws based on the tradition] which has survived in its works (in particular in the Damascus Covenant, the Manual of Discipline and other works, like the Dead Sea Scrolls); and there is a most ramified halakhah also developed among the Karaites [8th century AD]. In the relationship between the Written and the Oral Law there exists a kind of paradox, both interesting and characteristic. From the dogmatic point of view the Oral Law has its basis in, and derives its validity from, explicit verses in the Written Law, but at the same time the Written Law itself obtains its full validity and authority from the practical halakhah from the Oral Law. The Written Law in fact establishes the authority of the Oral Law by stipulating that "if there arises a matter too hard for thee, thou shalt turn unto the judge that shall be in those days", and "according to the tenor of the sentence which they shall declare unto thee from that place (...) According to the law which they shall teach thee, and according to the judgment which they shall tell thee shalt thou do. Thou shalt not turn aside from the sentence which they shall declare unto thee, neither to the right hand, nor to the left." (Deut. 17:8-11) It follows precisely from those very verses that it is the Oral Law itself which determines what the halakhah of the Written Law is in practice, including the true explication (as distinct from the theoretical philological meanings) of those verses just mentioned.

Furthermore the Oral Law lays down explicitly that from the moment of the giving of the Written Law – "from Heaven", at Sinai, but then in the language of men and to men – it is handed over absolutely to the judgment of the human intelligence of the scholars of the Oral Law, who accept the "yoke of the kingdom of Heaven, but may give halakhic ruling according to their own understanding ("henceforth no prophet can innovate anything" - Sifra, Be-Ḥukkotai 13:7; cf. Shab. 104a), since it is not in Heaven." (TJ MK 3:1, 81d; BM 59b - based upon Deut. 30:12) Though indeed this rule was not accepted without protest, yet those who objected belonged to the fringes of Judaism, and it was not they who determined the halakhah. The Oral Law is even able to circumvent the Written Law (see TJ Kid. 1:2, 59d). In consequence of this provision, Maimonides, follo-

wing the talmudic sages, ruled that “in an emergency any Bet Din (court of law) may cancel even the words of the (written) Torah (...) in order to strengthen religion and to prevent people from transgressing the Torah. They may order flagellation for breach of law, but such a ruling may not be effected permanently. Similarly, if they see a temporary need to set aside a positive precept, or to transgress an injunction in order to bring many back to religion, or in order to save many Israelites from affliction in other matters. They may act in accordance with the needs of the time, just as the physician amputates a hand or a leg in order to preserve the life. So, the Bet Din may rule at some particular time that some precept of the Torah may be transgressed temporarily in order that it may be preserved.” (Yad Mamrim 2:4)¹³⁸⁾ Then the sages rightly maintained that the Oral Law is the major and the main part of the Torah (i.e. both in quantity and quality). “The Holy One made a covenant with Israel only for the sake of that transmitted orally.” (Git. 60b; cf. TJ Pe’ah 2:6, 17a: “those given orally are beloved”) The Oral Law, which is well-nigh sovereign in relation to the Written Law, is the “mystery” (μυστήριον) of the Holy One, because of the essential nature of its being given orally. (Tanḥ. Ki Tissa 34, et al. – Though the sources speak of the Mishnah, it is certain that the whole Oral Law is intended.) It is this nature of the Oral Law - that it was given orally - that determines its vitality and organic development. It is not immutable and fossilized but alive and evolving. This vitality, however, could only be preserved in words not fixed in writing and in a binding and unchangeable form, but in words developing continually and unceasingly. As mentioned, the Sadducees had a Book of Decrees in writing which was their “Oral Law” and therefore according to their outlook the whole of the Torah too was “prepared in writing” (Kid. 66a – according to early printed versions and Haggadot ha-Talmud, Constantinople 1511, 56d), i.e. that only the written word binds. The Pharisees, however, claimed that the distinguishing feature and authority of the Oral Law is embedded in the fundamental rule of Deuteronomy 31:19: “put it in their mouths” (the scholium to Meg. Ta’an). The Oral Law was handed over to the sages by means of whose words it is fixed and evolves from generation to generation. It is this nature and this sovereignty that are the real will of the Written Law that was given on the basis that it be explained by means of the Oral Law. This, apparently, is the reason that although there is a disciple who expounds “more than was spoken to Moses at Sinai” (ARN2 13, 32), yet “even what a distinguished disciple will rule in the presence of his teacher was already conveyed to Moses at Sinai.” (TJ Pe’ah 2:6, 17a; cf. Meg. 19b and SEZ 2:171 – “Surely both the Bible and Mishnah were communicated by the Almighty.”) The meaning of all these and of similar sources is that from the point of view of its functional essence, the whole of the Oral Law was given to Moses at Sinai, since “the Torah itself gave the sages a mind to interpret and to declare.” (Sif. Num. 134; cf. the saying: “Matters not revealed to Moses were revealed to Akiva.” – Tanḥ. B. Num. 117; for its true meaning see Men. 29b – according to the aggadah/parable of Moses entering the yeshivah/school of Akiva: “and he did not know what they were saying”, not even a detail of a halakhah given to Moses at Sinai.) Even the Holy One repeats, as it were, a halakhah as are spoken by the sages.¹³⁹⁾ (P RK, ed. by D. Mandelbaum, 1962, 73, et al.).

[Moshe David Herr]



138) See also Matthew 19:8: “You are so heartless! That is why Moses allowed you to divorce your wife. But from the beginning God did not intend it to be that way.”

139) See also Matthew 16:19: “Whatsoever you shall bind on Earth shall be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever you shall loose on Earth shall be loosed in Heaven.”

From Temple Service to Synagogue



Greenery in the synagogue (the shul) during the Pentecost festivities (Shavuot).

The loss of the Temple of Jerusalem, as a consequence of the wars with Rome, which ravaged the country, had been a traumatic experience for the Jewish people that brought with it great theological problems, as without the Temple no sacrifice is possible, which is the only place where sacrifices are allowed. At the time, the sacrificial offerings were the central part of the Jewish ritual practice and it therefore called for a solution. How a solution evolved in the course of centuries is dealt with in this article, which gives interesting points of comparison with Christianity.

23.104 – The Essential Nature of Judaism

The most important rule in Judaism, and this includes Hasidism, is that of ‘lernen’ (learning by experience), in Hebrew ‘da’at’, a term that also applies to the tree of life. I deliberately use a Yiddish term, to indicate that it does not simply involve an intellectual activity. In Judaism, learning in its proper sense – that which more precisely connotes an activity involving meditating, examining attentively, pondering and debating at the same time – is contained in the Hebrew word ‘hagah’. Hagah means repeating something over and over again, periodically and cyclically. A focussing of the mind is achieved by such continuous repetition, which leads to remembering and an understanding by conviction. In this way the object of study becomes part of yourself. This kind of learning has served for the people of Israel to ‘live’ and to ‘survive’, to ‘remember’ and to ‘pass on’. This, Christianity could well take to heart! The Christian manner of learning is exactly like that in Jewish culture: a question of survival, although its urgency is often less well understood. For us this counts for our Christian individuality and for the Jews for their specific individuality, in order to lead a life that is pleasing to God.

This kind of permanent education is perhaps the most essential cultural trait of Judaism, the main binding element in their dispersal and diversity throughout the ages, that makes a Jew Jewish and makes him feel Jewish. Of the 613 precepts, none is considered as important as Deuteronomy 6:7 requiring the continuous teaching of the Torah (the first five books of the Bible): “*You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk*

of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.” Its corollary is the commandment of Joshua 1:8, right at the beginning of the book, that requires its continuous study (Joshua is the sixth book): *“This Book of the Law [the Torah] shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.”* Not coincidentally, the word torah also turns out to mean teaching or instruction. It follows from this precept that the passing on and training is more important than studying, for the Torah is more important than the rest. After all, the Book of Deuteronomy is part of the Torah, but Joshua - the sixth - is outside it. But how can something be passed on without first having studied it and how can we study without first having been taught? Since in this matter one can never become sufficiently proficient, and this is true of the greatest sage, teaching is also an exercise in study. This kind of study is also a sacrificial service, because it requires great effort. The soul of the student bows down, as it were, in great humility and sacrifice. Only in this way can more than knowledge be acquired: encyclopedic knowledge is different from wisdom and it is the latter that we strive for.

Jesus’ answer to the proposition that Torah-training is the most important duty for a believer – an issue that was hotly debated in His time – refers to verse 5 of the same chapter of Deuteronomy: *“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.”* Without denying this, the Talmud states that an ignoramus cannot be a pious person (Pirkei Avot 2:5), based on the concept that a person acts from his inner beliefs, and Bible study has a formative effect here. And thus study, such as study of the Ten Commandments, leads to practice (Kid-dushin 40b). The “Guide for the Perplexed” of the great scholar Maimonides (1135-1204) was attacked for its analytical approach because the rabbis had good reason to suspect that it would lead to a formalistic attitude towards life that would turn away from the rightful practice, one that is worthy of humankind, focused on God and according to the heart’s intention.

Hasidism has contemplated the manner of Jewish teaching extensively. This mystical movement originated in the eighteenth century in a reaction to the then current rationalism. The Hasidic principle holds that the value of being Jewish is not based on a person’s literacy but on the intention of his heart (Sanh. 106b). This fits the scheme of mind-intuition. Nothing spectacular, but Hasidism managed to give it a new impetus. The intuitive and spontaneous expression was the guiding principle, according to the words of the psalmist: *“Serve the Lord with gladness, shout with joy before his countenance.”* This also agrees with the dictum of Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153): *“It is better to glow than to know.”* In the expression of that joyous kind of glow, which persists even in the most miserable circumstances, the Hasidic person becomes mediator between God and men. Whoever ‘lerns’ is also a mediator inasmuch as ‘lernen’ is not purely an intellectual activity but an experience of the whole being. So, the suffering of the Messiah on the tree of life (da’at) was in its sacrificial reconciliation also a process of ‘lernen’.¹⁴⁰⁾



23.105 – *The Centre of Gravity shifts ‘away’ from Jerusalem*

How did the transition take place from the Temple service to *lernen* in its modern variant? In Jawne (or Jamnia), a place to the west of Jerusalem, the centre of gravity of the Temple service shifted to the house of *lernen* and became dissociated from the tabernacle service. When the Temple of Jerusalem was to be put out of action during the catastrophic events that took place under the Roman Empire – that was during the first war of 66 to 70 AD – Rabbi Jochanan Ben Zakkai pleaded with the future Emperor Vespasian to turn the little town of Jawne into a centre of study, of the Torah amongst other things. Ben Zakkai, who took part in the Sanhedrin that convicted Jesus, revolutionised Jewish thinking with his pronouncement that acts of loving kindness supersede sacrificial offerings as a way of attaining God’s forgiveness.

This concept took on its definitive form after the Second Jewish War. The revolt against the Romans, that lasted from 132 to 135 AD, was fought under the famous rebel leader Bar Kochba. The Talmud names him consistently ‘Bar Kosiba’ (son of a fool). The war was a terrible ordeal, ending with large-scale devastation over the whole country. More than 600,000 Jews perished and many were sold as slaves. The Temple Mount was sown with salt and all that remained was the Western Wall. An ambitious reconstruction programme was started, dedicated to Roman grandeur. Jupiter Capitolinus got his temple in Jerusalem on top of the Holy Sepulchre, which had been levelled off with rubble, and in the middle stood an equestrian statue of Emperor Hadrian who hated both Jews and Christians. Venus got her temple on top of a pile of rubble on Mount Calvary.

This was followed by the ruthless suppression of Jewish intellectual life. The Romans erased the name of Judah from official use, choosing deliberately to call the country Palestine, in an extremely humiliating reference to the Philistines, once Israel’s greatest foe. But even as a tribe they had long ceased to exist. The Roman Emperor perfectly understood the religious motive of the rebellion and he was well aware that the Jewish religion conferred a sense of community and strength to its people. Circumcision, keeping the Sabbath, or any other observance of Jewish laws was forbidden. Study of Jewish lore was made punishable by torture and death. Even the possession of the Pentateuch (the Greek name for the Thora) had become a capital offence. Rabbi Judah ben Bava was one of many put to death, in his case for ordaining six pupils at Usha. His pupils escaped and were later to become the leaders of a new academy. The pages of Jewish history covering this dark period are full of the names of martyrs who were killed for infringing Hadrian’s Edict. This lasted three full years until the Emperor’s death, but the damage inflicted in this short period of time was exceptionally great.

Under Hadrianus’ successor a more liberal policy was pursued and scribes were at liberty to resume their calling. In consequence, many of the exiles returned together with their coreligionists from the diaspora, among them a group of disciples that had been taught by Rabbi Akiba, who himself had been put to death for defying the Edict. The task of the survivors was to recover and complete the work of their predecessors, in which they found inspiration in the teachings of Ben Zakkai, the rabbi who had safeguarded the continuity of the permanent instruction, even before Titus had succeeded in destroying the Temple (in 70 AD). In this concentration of effort the centre of Jewish learning and authority in Palestine shifted to Galilee, first to its capital Sepphoris and vicinity, and ultimately to Tiberias, where the foundation was laid for the future Talmud. The Talmud would become the instrument by which the Jewish people could maintain their identity throughout the ages, despite being dispersed among the nations and despite the merciless persecutions.

140) Hebrews 5:8 reads: “Christ learned obedience by what He suffered.” If we replace “has learned” with “has lerned” in the sense just explained, then this verse becomes easier to understand.

23.106 – *Lernen in its Essential Practice and Suffering Nature...*

Because of the prescription of Ben Zakkai that acts of loving kindness supersede sacrifices as a way of attaining God's forgiveness, the Jewish communities in the diaspora displayed a great sense of responsibility towards their fellow men, and although rooted in Biblical notions of tribal responsibility, charity – the making of gifts to the poor – was to become a vehicle for expressing one's gratitude towards God or to seek his forgiveness: it substituted, in a sense, for sacrificial offerings. This idea, so impressively expounded in the Talmudic literature, was taken literally and, throughout the ages, deeply held. In addition to deeds of loving kindness, it was taught that *"the study of the Torah is a greater act than bringing daily sacrifices."* (Megillah 3b) Of course, prayer and repentance remained important, as always, but now it was being used as an ersatz for atonement. That is why they try to say their prayers at those moments that the sacrifices were once being offered in the Temple, a practice endorsed by the Talmudic story where Abraham asks God: ¹⁴¹⁾

«« *"Master of the universe (...) what shall become of them (the children of Israel) when there is no Temple any more?"* And the Lord answered: *"I have prepared for it by describing the ceremonial of the sacrifices. When they read these chapters I will count the reading as if they made those sacrifices being addressed, and I will forgive their sins."* »»

Yet 'lernen' – the key element to the Jewish experience – became in its essential practice and suffering nature the higher form of praying and longing for God, providing true comfort and meaning in their terrible exile from land and Temple.

The loss of the Temple had been a traumatic experience for the Jewish people and rituals were adopted to reinforce the symbolic link between the Temple and the synagogue. Without the Temple no sacrifice is possible. That is because of the binding of Isaac. Abraham built many altars but the only one on which he sacrificed was at Mount Moriah, where he substituted a ram for Isaac. This is traditionally situated at the Temple site in Jerusalem. But even today the sacrifice is impossible because the mosques of Al-Aqsa and the Cubbat al-Sachra (the Dome of the Rock) prevent the Temple from being rebuilt. So the scattered Jewish people looked for a solution and thus the temple service of animal sacrifice became a house of study, which is very different from the original intention. And yet it was not a totally new solution.

There is no longer any mourning for the loss of sacrifice. Only the orthodox prayer book repeatedly reiterates the hope that the Temple will be rebuilt and sacrifices offered there again. Pious Jews have the custom of shattering a glass during the wedding ceremony (chuppa). By this symbolic act they are remembering, even in the joyous moment of a wedding treaty, the destruction of the Temple while at the same time cherishing the hope that one day, once it has been rebuilt, their joy will be complete again. This hope finds expression in a school in Jerusalem, the Ateret Kohanim Yeshiva, that prepares its students to resume the sacrifice whenever, if ever, the Temple is rebuilt. The conservative prayer book has changed all future references to sacrifices to the past tense: it speaks proudly of the sacrifices that once were brought before God at the Temple, but expresses no desire to have them reinstated. In general it can be said that the link between 'lernen' and tabernacle service has been severed. Of course, we are familiar with texts such as in

141) The quote is from the Talmud Thaanit, fol. 24, and is referred to by Paul Drach, a rabbi who converted to Catholicism while on the nomination to become the Chief Rabbi of Paris. See: "De l'harmonie entre l'église et la synagogue", Paris # 1844: Vol. 1 note 25 of p. 17 found on p. 116. The German translation is found in "Der Babylonische Talmud", ausgewählt, überstzt und erklärt von Reinhold Mayer - Wilhelm Goldmann Verlag, München # 1981 (pp. 193-94).

Psalm 51 and Hosea 6, where God says that He desires no sacrifice, messianic texts that find their fulfilment in the Son. God promised to give a lamb in place of animals. His Son is called the Lamb of God. Inscribed in the perpetual present time this is the replacement once and for all, and not a throwback to the old practice of regular human sacrifice, as sometimes pretended.

23.107 – No Multicultural Melting Pot

We in the West tend to think of a school of learning first and foremost in terms of a general and university education, but this approach does not apply to orthodox Jewry. When Moses Mendelssohn (1729-1786), the most famed German Jew of his time, decided to translate the Bible into German and to accompany the translation with a commentary in Hebrew, he was sharply criticised by orthodox circles who feared that it would help spread the German language rather than Biblical knowledge and, by way of extension, to spread German culture whereby the Jewish way of doing things would be adversely affected. In the view of Jewry (also my view), culture, language and religion are interwoven and therefore they regarded this as such a serious issue. Mendelssohn himself suggested that it would serve to lift Jewish education to a higher level, but such an argument cannot be treated seriously since he scorned the idea of a homeland for the Jewish people because, in his words, the Jewish nation was irrevocably dead. He advocated an “*artificial cosmopolitanism*”. Does this sound familiar? Within Dutch political circles Christianity is regarded as a ‘quantité négligable’ (a negligible quantity). It is asserted that efforts should be made, within a cultural cosmopolitanism, to play on a level field with all other cultures and religions in order to allow the differences to become more vague in a spirit of close collaboration. But that is not our view. Nor, indeed, the notion has ever been taken seriously by dedicated Jewry.

Postscript: The Orthodox Jews and the Hasidim typically use the word ‘shul’ instead of synagogue, which is derived from a German word meaning ‘school’, to indicate its role as a place of study. But it is more. It is the centre of the Jewish religious community: a house of prayer (beit tefilla), study and education, social and charitable work, as well as a social centre. The term ‘shul’ is unfamiliar to many modern Jews, but everyone understands the term synagogue, which is the Greek for “beit k’nesset”, meaning place of gathering. The synagogue is the Jewish equivalent for church, more or less. It is usually also a “beit midrash” or house of study, and as a rule, just like the shul, has an important library accessible to all members of the community.



Moishe's Musings by Moishe Rosen

June 1st 2007

Question: A Jewish friend who was explaining how Judaism differs from Christianity, told me: *"Why buy retail when you can buy wholesale at the factory?"*

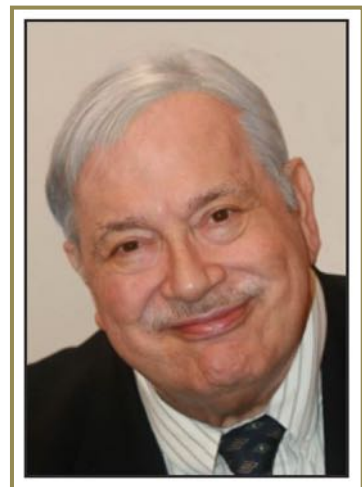
She was basically saying that she had no need for a 'middleman', that Jewish people go directly to God and do not need Jesus.

Answer: Your Jewish friend holds to a modern form of Judaism, which can ignore certain Scriptures that might be troubling – particularly those concerning sin. Modern Jews are told almost nothing about sin, or how the Jewish Scriptures teach that sin must be expiated. Consequently, many view sin as no more than a bad deed that can be cancelled by doing a good deed. Scriptural statements concerning the Temple, the sacrificial system and the elements of atonement are explained away as being 'obsolete'.

If you hope to enlighten your Jewish friend on these matters, a good beginning point might be a discussion of the Day of Atonement. Ask if your friend knows how the Day of Atonement was celebrated in ancient times. Why was it that any Jew could not just walk into the Holy of Holies and announce: *"Hey God, there are a few things that I would like to talk over with you ..."*

Scriptures to find out about the kind of Judaism that God delivered to His people of ancient times. She might be surprised to learn that the Jewish religion was built around a mediating place, that Jewish priests served as mediators and performed the sacrifices for atonement of sin.

Now you might wonder: *"How could the Jewish religion today say so little about the biblical principle of atonement and mediation when it was so central to the original religion?"* Well, modern Judaism is very practical. There is no longer a Temple, so there can be no Temple sacrifice. Rather than creating a dilemma by teaching people about necessary rituals they can no longer ob-



serve, the rabbis have pressed on to the question of “*What can we do instead?*” And of course they came up with their own solution to the problem. They say: “*Because the Temple was destroyed we have to make atonement in a different way. Today we practice T’shuvah (repentance), T’fillah (prayer) and Tzedakah (good deeds and works of charity).*” Of course, the Bible teaches that God desires us to do all those things and one can’t imagine a relationship with Him that would omit any of those three. But as important as repentance, prayer and good deeds are, none of them is given as a means of atonement.

Answering the question of “*What can we do instead?*” was a way of keeping the Jewish people in alignment with one another, relating as a community. But it could not solve the problem of bringing individuals, much less all the Jewish people, into alignment with God.

Being out of alignment with the Almighty and failing to meet the purpose for which we were created is not a Jewish problem. It is the human predicament. Sin is the great separator. It is woven into the fabric of our souls. The only Savior from this pandemic soul sickness is Y’shua, the Messiah of Israel and Savior of the world.



THE EXPECTATION OF THE JEWS



Photo Adam Reeder

We eagerly look forward to the coming of God's reign on earth. There is much opposition to this event. Psalm 2 prophesies about this and begins with the question: "Why do the heathen rage?" Yes why, because the grandiose outcome is certain in advance. Yet is not appreciated by the proud rulers of our age. In this article we look at how ancient Judaism interpreted this psalm as to themselves and the nations around, and how they have given it form in accordance to their messianic expectations.

24.108 – Even the Perfect King would be a Tyrant

In Psalm 2 is written: "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his Anointed: 'Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us! (...) Then shall He speak unto them (...): 'I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.' (...) Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.'" Zion is the image of Jerusalem, captured by King David from the Jebusites, and therefore this city is known as the City of David. The Judahite David, king of all Israel, prefigures in the Bible the long-awaited Messiah, for Genesis 49:10 says: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto Him shall the gathering of the people (plural form) show obedience." Shiloh is here one of the common names for the great Messiah Prince.

The foregoing indicates that God's kingdom, in its direct meaning, is intimately connected with an earthly and worldwide kingdom, which in turn cannot be separated from the extraordinary calling of the 'people' and the function of the State of Israel. What was true in ancient times, when these words were recorded, is still true today. God's Word never fails. It also shows us that there is a arrogant and idiosyncratic conspiracy against

the divinely established order of kings,¹⁴²⁾ an institution that serves as a forerunner and is a reflection of the kingdom to be claimed by God at some future time.

From a Biblical perspective, it can be said that anyone who opposes the principle of 'king by the grace of God' also opposes God. To clarify, this is a principle, a way of government. That's why the Dutch national anthem sings: "*To the king of Spain I've been granted a lifelong loyalty. (...) But God, I trust, will rate me his willing instrument.*" In the sixteenth century, the struggle for independence in the low lands on the sea was not fought against the institutional monarchy but against the then ruling Spanish monarch, that is, against the individual who misbehaved.¹⁴³⁾ That is the quintessence of the Dutch national anthem. The French anthem, the Marseillaise, however, turns against the principle itself. In it any prince, even good prince, even perfect prince, is depicted as a tyrant and conspirator – one who conspires with God, for that is the why the revolutionaries, like Robespierre, put into it under the slogan "*ni roi, ni dieu*" (neither king nor God). The Dutch anthem speaks in the vein of psalm 2 about "*defeating tyranny*", but a totally different tyranny to which the God-haters refer. Seen in this way, the abhorrent La Marseillaise is the antithesis to the Dutch anthem, called The Wilhelmus.¹⁴⁴⁾

As an aside, it should be noted that just as there is a degeneration in the one, there is also a degeneration in the other. Democracy, preferably democratism, is the degeneration of a concept that is essentially correct but in which popular power prevails at all costs. If we put aside the excesses, which we are now witnessing more than ever, the democra-

142) Deuteronomy 16:18 until 21:9 explains the ranking order of kings. In that list verses 17:8-13 treat the divine constitutional and moral law and its central interpretative and priestly authority. Verses 17:14-20 treat the God chosen king who should fear God in the execution of his duties. He represents the supreme political authority and as such he should fear God and be fearless to humans, as has been advanced by the beloved Marie Leckzinska (1703-1768), queen of France: "The human indulgence, condemnable in all Christians, becomes a true apostasy in those who have been established in a position to command and to instruct." Verses 18:9-22 treat the prophetic guidance to which both the political and priestly spheres should be attentive. These are the three biblical categories of anointed ones. In the case of prophets, the emphasis is less on the rite of anointing but pertains to the gift of the Holy Spirit: that is to say that God does the anointing Himself. With Adam and the Adamah (Eve) all three functions were fulfilled in the 'one' couple in a close spirit of unity-loveliness.

143) The northern provinces of the Low Countries turned against the Spanish King Philip II by signing the Union of Utrecht in 1579. However, it was not intended that the provinces would not have a landlord. William of Orange, the leader of the revolt, therefore committed himself to the younger brother of the French king, the Duke of Anjou. In January 1581, Anjou is proclaimed by the States General as "Prince and Lord of the Netherlands". However, he declines the honour, which creates the de facto Republic of the United Netherlands. The provinces still have to formally get rid of their ruler Philip II. The States General set out their motives in the so-called "Plakkaat van Verlatinghe" (placard of secession). A prince, they argue, is indeed appointed by God, but can nevertheless be deposed by his subjects. A prince is head over his subjects to protect them, and he must not require them to submit to him in everything and serve him as slaves. If he does so, he exceeds the limits of his God-given mandate and is a tyrant. On July 26, 1581, when the edict was signed, Philip II and his heirs were deposed forever. In practice, the placard amounted to a declaration of independence; this was the first time in the Eighty Years' War that there was an explicit rebellion against the king. Previously, in the Wilhelmus, the Pacification of Ghent and even in the Union of Utrecht itself, it was always said that the people remained loyal to the king and were only fighting the Spanish soldiers.

144) See the Government Gazette Le Moniteur on the parliamentary deliberations from January 2, 1793, which led to a majority vote in parliament for the death penalty of King Louis XVI, who was murdered on the 21st, one and a half year after his capture. The gruesome lyrics of the French national anthem date from mid-1792.

tistic principles are applicable everywhere, even in the purely monarchical state. Kingship also has its excesses. But are the excesses of parenthood, in which children are abused, an argument for the abolition of parental authority? In this sense there is good and bad kingship, good and bad democracy, good and bad parenting.



24.109 – The Jewish Vision in the Christian Era

In the interpretation of Psalm 2, in conjunction with the prophecies of Daniel, the emphasis within ancient Judaism was on the militant, of God as a warrior. This part of Psalm 2 goes as follows: *“Ask of me, and I shall give you the heathen for your inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron. You shall dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel. Now listen to this warning, you kings. Learn this lesson, you rulers of the world.”* In Jesus’ time, the Jews chose to explain those verses literally as if God would like to crush all nations, and this to Israel’s advantage, as if God had only the salvation of Israel in mind. This imagery need not be seen in an absolutely literal sense, as something inescapable, for it is primarily conditional. An ancient Egyptian and magical ritual, common in pre-Christian times, consisted of writing on a clay vase or bowl the names of the tributary nations and their princes and shattering the pottery as a warning of what was about to happen if someone dared to resist the new ruler, whose yoke in the vein of Jeremiah 28:14 was henceforth decisive for the ins and outs of the nations subdued: *“For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: I have put a yoke of iron on the neck of all these nations, that they may serve Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. They shall serve him for I have delivered even the wild beasts into his hand!”* As soon as the pottery was shattered, every spectator knew that this symbolic act assured that anyone who had the bold courage to resist would be utterly defeated. The symbolic act was enough. It didn’t have to end in a literal crush.¹⁴⁵⁾ This is going to happen in the near future with all those nations who stubbornly resist God – especially through the legalized practice of abortion, as clearly emphasized in the Book of Truth. (see Appendix 14) But the Jews in Jesus’ day thought it pertained to all nations, and especially Rome, that dared to oppose the Jews...

According to the then current interpretation of Daniel 2:44, the messiah had to and would be a warrior who would shatter all kingdoms to finally establish his own empire: *“And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be*

145) See via Google: UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology – “execration ritual”.

destroyed, and the kingdom shall not be left to other people. It shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." In inter-testamentary times, people looked forward to its fulfillment, not realizing that first the suffering servant was to come, known in Jewish tradition as the son of Joseph. I am now quoting from an old tract called "The Expectation of the Jews," intended as an apologia to Christianity, dating back to the mid-second century: ¹⁴⁶⁾

«« The expectation (in Jesus' time) seems to have been that the Messiah was to be a prophet like unto Moses, yet greater. (...) (But) another and much larger group of people advanced for the Messianic prophecies a more worldly meaning. The great personage whose coming they shortly expected was to be a king, but greater than any who had sat upon the Jewish throne. It was with this expectation, evidently, that Jesus' disciples followed Him through his whole ministry. And even after his resurrection they seem for a while to have entertained the same hopes. One of the questions they asked Him after He rose was (Acts 1:6): *"Are You going to restore in this time the Kingdom to Israel?"* And at the last supper they disputed *"which of them should be the greatest"*, that is, who should be highest in office in the new Kingdom that He was about to set up. It was with this idea that He was hailed by the multitude into Jerusalem with the shout *"Hosanna to the Son of David"*. This was the idea that Nathanael meant to express when he said, on receiving the evidence that He was a prophet (John 1:49): *"Rabbi, You are the Son of God, You are the King of Israel."* That it was his temporal character to which Nathanael here referred we have sufficient evidence in the information which first directed his attention to Jesus (John 1:45): *"We have found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, wrote – Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."*

(...) So prevalent had this expectation become that it had spread beyond the Holy Land. Tacitus records the fact that among many *"there was a persuasion that in the ancient books of the priesthood it was written that at this precise time the East should become mighty, and that those issuing from Judeah should rule the world."* And Suetonius writes: *"that in the East an ancient and constant opinion prevailed that it was fated there should issue at this time from Judeah those who should obtain universal dominion."*

This confident expectation of the Jews had already caused no little political disturbance. It was this proud anticipation of universal conquest that made them so restive under the government of the Romans. That they who were destined to reign over the world – and whose King Messiah was to have the heathens for his inheritance, the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession, who was to break them with a rod of iron, and dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel – should be in vassalage to a foreign power, was more than they could bear.

(...) One truth which John the Baptist announced bears evident marks of supernatural origin – since it contradicted the conceptions and prejudices of the age – that the Messiah and his Kingdom were not to be national, not belonging de jure and exclusively to the posterity of Abraham alone. There is a maxim, as common as the very letters of the alphabet, in the writings of the rabbis, that *"All Israel is to partake in the world to come"*, that is, in the Messianic Kingdom, merely by virtue of their descent from Abraham. They had not the slightest notion that it was to be a kingdom selected from Israel and other nations, a new community by no means coextensive with the seed of Abraham. That it was to be a moral and a spiritual kingdom was just as far from their concepts. »»

¹⁴⁶⁾ "Proofs of the Life and Death of Jesus" by Hubert Luns under the chapter "The Messianic Expectation as Motivation for the Crucifixion of Christ".

That most Jews in Jesus' day had a militant expectation of the 'coming reign' is also apparent from another quote from the same tract: (paraphrase on Luke 4)

«« On Christ's arrival at Nazareth, his previous residence, He attempted to preach in the synagogue where He had been accustomed to worship. The people listened to the first part of his discourse with pleasure and admiration, though, according to a strong propensity of human nature, they were disposed to sneer at Him as the son of a carpenter. At the first hint, however, of the teaching that the new dispensation was not to be a national religion, but to be extended to Gentile as well as Jew, they became violently enraged. They might have been led to suspect that He was not altogether sound in the national faith of a Messiah, who was to destroy the heathens, from his manner of quoting that striking passage of Isaiah: "*The spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach glad tidings to the poor. He has sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bound, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.*" HERE HE STOPPED, which is very important. The rest of the sentence is: "*...and the day of vengeance of our God*".

Had He quoted the rest of the sentence without explanation, as applicable to Himself, they would have understood Him to sanction their expectation that He was to destroy and not to save the other nations of the earth, and would have perhaps cried out: "*Hosanna to the son of David!*" But not only did He pass over this most important part of their messianic traditions, so comforting to them under their present political oppression, but He went on to intimate that the heathens were not only to be spared, but to be admitted into the Kingdom of the Messiah. "*I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias (...) but to none of them was Elias sent except to Sarepta, a city of Sidon, to a woman that was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the days of Eliseus the prophet, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian.*" This was too much. A Messiah who could tolerate or look favourably upon the heathens was not to be endured!

"And all those in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up and thrust Him out of the city, and they led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw Him down over the cliff. Then passing through the midst of them, He went his way." »»

This point of view is illustrated by Qumran's famous "War Scroll", on permanent display in the Shrine of the Book in Western Jerusalem which, to use the words of Neil Silberman, is "*a kind of chapel of relics dedicated to the miracle of national rebirth*". This considerably damaged scroll describes the last vengeful battle, a small fragment of which reads in characteristic language: ¹⁴⁷⁾

«« For into the hand of the oppressed You will deliver the enemies of all the lands; into the hands of those who are prostrate in the dust, in order to bring down all mighty men of the peoples, to return the recompense of the wicked on the heads of the stubborn, to pronounce the just judgment of your truth on all children of Man, and to make for Yourself an everlasting name among the people. You will show Yourself great and holy through the wars by which You reveal Yourself to the remnant of the nations. So they may know that You are God when You carry out judgments on Gog and on all his company that are assembled about us, for You will do battle against them from the high heavens for their everlasting confusion. »»

147) "The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Translation" by Michael Wise, Martin Abegg Jr, and Edward Cook – HarperCollins, New York # 1996 (fragment 1QM ≈ 11:13-20 on p. 161)

Looking for a warlike messiah may have been the common opinion at the time, but other voices were heard too. In this way Melker, the priest from Bethlehem, wrote in the time Jesus was born: ¹⁴⁸⁾

«« Every suffering of David, or lamentation of Job, or glory of Solomon – yea, every wail of human sorrow, every throe of human grief, every dying sigh, every falling bitter tear – is a type, a prophecy of the coming King of the Jews and the Saviour of the world. Israel stands as a common factor at every great epoch of history.

(...) And this, I fear, is going to be a trouble with our nation: our people are going to look to ‘the one sent’ (Shiloh) as a temporal deliverer, and will aim to circumscribe Him to the Jews alone. And when his actions begin to flow out to all the inhabitants of the world in love and charity, as is most certainly shown forth in the ninth section of the holy prophet (Jer. 9:24-25), then I fear the Jews will reject Him, and, in fact, we are warned of that already in the third section of Jeremiah’s word. To avoid this, Israel must be taught that the prophecy of Isaiah does not stop with the Babylonian captivity and return to the Kingdom of Heaven, and that Ezekiel’s wheels (of ch. 1 and 10) do not whirl politically or spiritually in heaven, but upon earth, and have reference to earthly revolutions or changes, and show the bringing to pass of the great events of which this of Bethlehem is the grandest of all. (...) We, as Jews, are the only people that God has entrusted with the great questions, and, of course, the world will look to and expect us to give an interpretation to these questions. As we are entrusted with these things, God will hold us responsible if we fail to give the true light on this subject. »»

Jeremiah 9:24-25 reads: *“I am the Lord, exercising loving kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth, for in these I delight. Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, that I will punish all who are circumcised with the uncircumcised”*, and indeed this has happened.

24.110 – The Missionary Drive, a Pendant of Messianicism

Israel has forsaken its historic duty to proclaim the message of salvation to the nations about the one and true God. That is not the same as making them Jewish! Israel’s error of judgment has always been its contempt for foreigners, whom they were accustomed to call dogs and count as the scum of the earth; see story in Matthew 15:21-28. She has taken over the attitude of Miriam (Num. 12), the ‘prophetess’ of lying lips and deceitful tongue, who reviled at Moses’ wife. ¹⁴⁹⁾ His wife, called Zipporah, was the daughter of Jethro, who was a Cushite (Nubian) and must have been of very dark complexion, like the Cushite Queen of Sheba. In those days, being black was probably seen as a distasteful condition. In the first Gospel of the Infancy of Jesus Christ, written no later than the second century, is written (17:9): *“The children of Israel are like Cushites among the people, and the women said: We beseech of thy mercy that Thou wouldst restore those boys to their former state.”* This indicates that Cushite was a term of abuse. Having reviled Zipporah because of the colour of her skin, Miriam was punished with the curse she had spoken and suddenly she caught a distasteful skin condition so that she became as white as snow: not black, but white!

The Book of Acts also bears witness to the Jewish disdain for outsiders. When the Apostle Paul preaches in the synagogue of Antioch (Acts 13:14-45) and tells of the

¹⁴⁸⁾ This is stated in the report of Melker, the superior of the synagogue of Bethlehem, and can be found in chapter 4 of the ArchkoVolume. For a discussion of this, see via Google: “Proofs of the Life and Death of Jesus - Hubert Luns”.

¹⁴⁹⁾ In Exodus 15 Miriam is called ‘prophetess’. In ancient Hebrew, prophet(ess) is a term used positively as well as negatively, as with the ‘prophet’ Balaam.

forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ and the justification by faith in Him, everyone listens attentively and even invites him to the next Sabbath to continue his preaching work. But when that day the entire city, including many Gentiles, had come out to listen to Paul's sermon, the Jews became "*were filled with envy*" and began to insult him as he spoke. That was the breaking point, that the good news was also intended for the Gentiles! That was indigestible. The same is also true of his much later speech in Jerusalem. After they dragged him out of the Temple, Paul is allowed to put forward his defense, explaining in detail about his conversion when Christ appeared to him in a vision. Nobody interrupts him. Tumult only breaks loose when he adds that he was sent far away to the Gentiles. "*Then they shouted at a loud voice: Away with such a fellow from the earth! It is not fit that he should live.*" (Acts 22:21-22)



Of lying lips and a deceitful tongue...

We thus see that the people of Israel in its uplifted mission as a teacher of righteousness have demonstrated way too little missionary zeal, though they have always welcomed new converts, in particular in the pre- and early Christian times. According to Josephus, the inhabitants of Greek and other foreign cities displayed great zeal for the spread of Judaism. (Contra Ap. 2:39) Then we are talking roughly about the time of the rise and heyday of the Roman Empire in which it was easy to travel, of which the starting date might be the conquest of the Ptolemaic Empire (Egypt) by Rome in 30 BC.¹⁵⁰ Once converted, the proselyte received a new name and was entirely cut off from his family, although unconverted proselytes, the so-called Yirei Hashem or Yirei Shamayim, or God-fearing ones, were welcome to attend synagogue services. The extent to which they decided to follow Judaism was entirely free and left to the 'God-fearing one'. After the Christian Church formally opposed Judaizing – in a time that she had become powerful – proselytism receded.

The recruitments were always inward, not outward. I explain myself further. The ancient times ought to have known tribes of great virtue who earnestly searched for God and would have been delighted to have been instructed on how to set up their own service of reconciliation as a prefiguration of things to come. A missed opportunity! Not all were like the wicked Canaanites, many of whom have been assimilated with the people of Israel over time! The Cushite Eunuch (a honorific title at the time), who was a non-Jew, complained (Acts 8:26-33): "*How can I understand what I am reading in Scripture unless someone guides me?*" This proves my point. Indeed, look at Isaiah 56:3-8:

«« Let no foreigner who is bound to the Lord say: "The Lord will surely exclude me from his people." And let no eunuch complain: "I am only a dry tree." For this is what the Lord says: To the eunuchs [the unfertile ones] who keep my Sabbaths, who choose what pleases Me and hold fast to my covenant, to them I will give within my temple and its walls a memorial and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that will endure forever. And foreigners who bind themselves to the Lord to minister to him, to love the Name

150) Encyclopaedia Judaica 2nd Ed. 2007 under Proselytes (1st sentence): "There is ample evidence of a widespread conversion to Judaism during the period of the Second Temple, especially the latter part of the period, and the word 'ger', which in Biblical times meant a stranger, or an alien, became synonymous with a proselyte."

of the Lord, and to be his servants, all who keep the Sabbath without desecrating it and who hold fast to my covenant, these I will bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations. The Sovereign Lord declares, He who gathers the exiles of Israel: I will gather still others to them besides those already gathered! »»»

A separatist attitude to life is also not alien to modern Judaism. Orthodox Jews still pray during morning prayers: *“Blessed are Thou Lord, King of the universe, because Thou have not made me a goy (heathen), a slave or a woman.”*¹⁵¹⁾ This tendency explains much why Israel, like unclean Miriam, has been shut out of the camp until it will be admitted once again cleansed.¹⁵²⁾ (Num. 12:14) Does not Paul say: *“Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation has come unto the Gentiles.”* And elsewhere: *“Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved, (...) for they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the Father’s sakes.”* (Rom. 11:11, 25-28)

Some may object that the Mosaic law itself promote contempt for foreigners, because of its emphasis on segregation. However, trying to keep a national identity and showing love for the foreigner is not in itself contradictory. This has been clarified in the second “School of Hillel letter” regarding “God’s providence to the Jews”, written shortly after the destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem in 70 AD:¹⁵³⁾

«« To secure this one grand and fundamental design – that is, the worship of the One living and true God – the whole Mosaic economy was modelled. For this

151) The ‘having not created me a woman’ is part of a group that also expresses gratitude for not having been created a Gentile or a slave. It appears as part of a sequence of blessings, found in the Talmud, that are meant to accompany activities that are performed in the course of waking up in the morning, such as hearing the first cock-crow, opening one’s eyes, stepping on the ground, getting dressed, etc. The following is an excerpt from “Women in Judaism - class 31 (year 2000)” by Mrs. Leah Kohn, which resorts under ProjectGenesis (www.torah.org): «« I have taught and worked with unaffiliated Jewish men and women for the past 17 years. In fact, I came to the United States from my home in Israel for this express purpose. I grew up in an observant Jerusalem neighborhood, a twelfth generation ‘Yershalmi’ (inhabitant of Jerusalem). For as long as I can remember I had been surrounded by men who each morning recited the prayer: “Blessed are You, Hashem our G-d, King of the Universe, for not having made me a woman.” I never objected to this practice – not because I was thoughtless or accepting. As a child and a young adult I was perpetually curious and asked questions about Judaism regularly. Nonetheless, this blessing never became an issue for me. On arriving in the U.S. and working with American Jews, I was confronted with the challenge of explaining this ‘blessing’ to many women whom it had perturbed. For the first time in my life I started to wonder why I was not similarly bothered. »»

152) Israel’s contempt for the goyim (foreign people) probably reached its apex under the Hasmonian King and High Priest John Hyrcanus (134-104 BC) after he had high-handedly abrogated the oral law and all its ordinances and forced the Gentile Galileans and the Idumeans to convert to Judaism, the only forcible mass conversion in the history of Judaism. Though the Galileans and Idumeans did not ostensibly resist their conversion, we may speculate – there exists no definite account of it – that these acts caused resentment and horror under a large number of the religious elite, associated with the Pharisees, who must have considered it worse than the relentless religious persecution of the Jewish faith that preceded it, because now the putrefaction was eating away from within. They declared impure the soil of foreigners and forbade all intercourse among Jews and strangers out of fear of contamination. As the sacrificial vases were contaminated by the least impure contact, they came to regard themselves contaminated by any contact with strangers.

purpose we were forbidden to marry foreigners; for this purpose our sacrifices were all to be offered in one place, and by one family of priests, lest we should wander away and become corrupt by association with idolaters; for this purpose we were forbidden certain kinds of food, such as were offered in sacrifices to heathen deities. We were not to be present at idolatrous feasts, nor to become accustomed to those moral abominations with which heathen worship was invariably accompanied. »»»

Curiously, the Jewish sages have always considered Abraham's missionary zeal as one of his great virtues. But did they put it in practice? I now quote from the authoritative ArtScroll Tanach Series (overview Sidrah Toldos and comment on Genesis 2:4):

«« Abraham and Sarah dedicated their lives to seeking out people to whom they could bring the message of God. Abraham had an 'army' of some 318 disciples of fighting age who were part of his own household (Gen. 14:14); even before moving to Canaan from Haran, he and Sarah had proselytized untold numbers of people (Gen. 12:5). (...) We find in Genesis 2:4: *"This is the offspring (i.e. the products) from the heaven and the earth after they were being created."* As a Midrash and the Zohar comment, 'created' (b'beram) has in the Hebrew the same letters as 'for Abraham'. Hence, the world was created for the sake of Abraham and his teachings; his proclamation of Hashem (the Name) as the only God and of His infinite kindness were the purpose and foundation of creation. Abraham did his share to perfect creation. By employing love, goodness and hospitality (chessed) he was indeed able to raise armies of converts in Haran and Canaan. (...) In the Hilchos Avodah Zorah, Rambam explains (1:2-3): *"On this path [of progressively more serious idolatry] the world went and continued to develop until the birth of the pillar of the universe – our father Abraham (...) He arose and called out in a great voice to the entire world to inform them that there is a single God (...) from city to city and from kingdom to kingdom he went (...) until he arrived in Canaan (...) until he gathered to himself thousands and tens of thousands."* Abraham's academy was open to all who would listen; Isaac had only one student, Jacob, but what a student! We do not know the ultimate results of Abraham's teachings – although it is axiomatic that despite the disappearance of his converts (in the course of history), the lifetime devotion of an Abraham had lasting effects – but we do know that the single product of Isaac's academy became the father of our nation, [the perfect tool dedicated] to God's purpose in the work of creating heaven and earth. »»»

I bring up these arguments because the proclamation used is closely related to the prevailing view of the organizational form of God's kingdom on earth. The missionary zeal is a pendant to cherished Messianicism. The stronger the expectation of an earthly and global empire, the stronger the missionary drive. It may be said that this vocation has always embraced Judaism. It is therefore not surprising that world-conquering Marxism came from Jewish quarters (Karl Marx was Jewish). However, Marxism and related groups do not look for a heavenly kingdom descending on earth, but for a purely human creation in which all religious ideals are stripped of their luster.

24.111 – Jewish Messianism in our days

The Jewish tradition, as it took shape in the Mishnah (± 220 AD), focused on what was considered honorable, ignoring what fell short of it, ingeniously adapting the reading material to that purpose. The original pluralism of the Jewish world of thought was thereby violated. The painful disillusionment created by the bloody suppression of the Bar Kokhba Rebellion prompted the Jews to bury this entire episode and forget about

the theological considerations that had played a part in it. A certain shame might have prevailed concerning their concept of a vengeful God seeking to destroy the heathen nations; if so, it would be a justifiable shame because the two complementary aspects of God, being righteous and merciful at the same time, have always been known to them: Amos's message portrays the inflexible righteousness of God, Hosea's his great forgiveness. These two may not be separated, because God's involvement is in 'both' justice and mercy.

The messianicism in the new era after the Bar Kochba Revolt, that took hold after 138 AD, appears to concentrate more on a remote future, where the deliverer is seen on a celestial stage. Until that era the calculations for the advent of the reign of God were revised, each time that the events, often very traumatic, failed to meet expectations. George Foot Moore comments in his famous work "Judaism: (7:2)

«« It is probable that similar corrected computations were made in the period of the Bar Kochba Revolt. After the calamitous issue of the insurrection had discredited its Messiah, mistrust of all attempts to fix a date for [the involvement of] God and censure of those who tried it prevailed. »»

It is in this light understandable that anti-Semitism, which emerged in a particularly virulent form in the nineteenth century from which Nazism originated, gave critical weight to the 'return' (aliyah) back Home. It was the unbelieving Jews who pioneered the exploitation of what is now called the Land of Israel. That may seem strange, and it has also led to fierce resistance within orthodox Judaism, who could hardly accept it. Yet it is not unbiblical. After all, the return was unconditional, as announced by the exile prophet Ezekiel:

«« Thus says the Lord God: I do not do this for your sake, O house of Israel, but for my holy Name's sake, which you have profaned among the nations wherever you went. And I will sanctify my great Name, which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst, and in this way the nations shall know that I am the Lord – prophecy of the Lord God. For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land. Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean. I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you. I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. »» (Ez. 36:22-26)

It was only after the Second World War that the movement within practicing Judaism became increasingly important, based on a truly religiously driven messianism. One of the expressions of this is the strong desire to rebuild the Temple of Jerusalem. It is extremely interesting to observe these developments. I am curious what this will bring!



APPENDIX 14

• Quotes from the Book of Truth in connection with Legalized Abortion Practice

All those nations that persistently resist God – especially through the horrors of legalized abortion – will experience the destruction as announced in Psalm 2.

“Abortion, the worse form of genocide. I spill tears every single moment for My little souls, who never get to take their first breath.” (Aug. 1st, 2011 and Febr. 17th, 2012)

God the Father: *“My Hand will fall with force on nations who legalize abortion.”* (Aug. 29th 2011)

“The chastisement, which My Father will unleash in the world against the sin of abortion.” (Oct. 11th, 2011 and May 29th, 2013)

“It is the sin of abortion which will be the downfall of many nations and for this they will be punished severely.” (July 29th, 2012)

“The nations, which constantly try to make it available to more women and who promote it as being a good thing, will be taken out and dealt a punishment from which there can be no recovery. (...) God will not allow you to touch the lives He created. His punishment will be meted out upon you in the form of earthquakes and many nations will continue to receive punishment after punishment until the day of the Lord. Abortion and murder will be the two sins for which My Father will cast down a severe chastisement upon the world.” (Nov. 21st, 2012 and July 4th, 2013)

“Accept abortion and you accept the deliberate killing of a child of God.” (May 1st, 2013)

“Those in political positions, who control the availability of abortion, will be the first to be punished. Await now as you will see how they will suffer for the atrocities which they condone before Me. [The members of] those groups, who plot the demise of the world’s population through abortion, will die in agony by My Hand. Justice will be served on them finally.” (Sept. 26th, 2013)

APPENDIX 15

• A study of Psalm 2 – Christ-King

Hette Abma

At first, when we think of the words of Psalm 2, we can think of David, Solomon and other kings. But at a certain point the image nevertheless rises above the historical dimensions. However powerful the kings of Israel have been, they have never pretended to rule the world. Many commentators therefore think of the Great Monarch during the Reign of Peace, based on the way in which the poet of Psalm 72 speaks about this: *“He shall have dominion from sea to sea, as far as nations are known.”* As a matter of fact, this is about the promised Messiah: the God-given king of Israel.

At the end of the Psalm, it is five times, that heartfelt encouragement is given to the nations and all worldly rulers to show respect for the Lord and his Anointed One (verses 10-12): Act wisely; be instructed; serve the Lord with awe; rejoice with shudder; and finally: kiss the Son. Thanks to archaeological excavations, we see how this happened. Old pictures show people kneeling to kiss the feet of a king: in this way they recognized the authority of that monarch.

It is enriching to see how the apostles and evangelists (that is, the writers of the so-called New Testament) quote a fragment from Psalm 2 several times. Verse 7 is quoted in Paul’s sermon in the Antioch synagogue in reference to Jesus’ resurrection from the dead. (Acts 13:33) At Jesus’ baptism in the Jordan, the Evangelist adds a line from Isaiah’s prophecy: *“My chosen one, in whom my soul is well pleased.”* (Mt 3:17) This immediately draws the attention of readers, who are familiar with the life and death of our Savior, to the fact that He will fulfill his calling as the suffering servant which, as we all know, will culminate in the resurrection. It will be in those same words during the Transfiguration on Mount Tabor that the Son is glorified. (Mt. 17:5) But it is precisely because of this that the Son becomes the target of the reproach and hatred of the nations, because they do not want to see the prevailing balance of power to be disturbed. The ultimate consequence of this, Peter and John point out in their prayer of thanks after having been released from prison: *“Lord! You are the God who made the heavens and the earth and the sea and all things in them, and who said through David: ‘Why do the nations rage, and the people plot a vain thing? The kings of the earth have set themselves up, and the rulers conspire against the Lord and his Anointed One.’”* (Ps. 2:1 ff.) They go on to



Christ-King

explain why: *“For truly against your holy servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel were gathered together to do what your hand and counsel determined beforehand.”* (Acts 4:24-28) The Anointed One had to pay with his life for being loyal to the cause of God, but on Easter morning it appears that the Lord would not leave it at that. This too is recalled in Acts, in the rendering of Paul’s sermon in the synagogue of Antioch, to which we just referred: *“We declare to you glad tidings, that the promise which was made to the fathers, God fulfilled for us his children, in that He has raised up Jesus. As is also written in the second psalm: ‘You are my Son. Today I have begotten You.’ And that He raised Him from the dead, never more to return to corruption.”* (Acts 13:32-34)

The writer of the letter to the Hebrews quotes the same words from verse 7, to then clarify how Jesus rules as king on behalf of God: *“To the Son He says: your throne, O God, is forever and ever. A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of your Kingdom.”* (Heb. 1:5-8) In the letter to one of the Asian Minor congregations, Jesus assures his faithful followers that they may reign with Him during the period of his glorious future.

[Dutch quarterly magazine: Prophetic Perspective, Summer 2013 - No. 79, quotes from “Study of Psalm 2”]

Ds. G.H. Abma (1947-2017) was a pastor of the Protestant Church in the Netherlands and was editor-in-chief of Prophetic Perspective for many years.

‘The CHURCH, a continuation of the Synagogue’ — and vice-versa —



A common view is that the Christian church was born during the outpouring of the Holy Spirit during the great festival of Pentecost, fifty days after the Crucifixion. The birth of the new Church would simultaneously be the death of the old one. From that perspective, how easily the idea could take hold that the new church has replaced Israel and that the Old Covenant has been done away with forever! However, the Church (the Kehal Chasidim) has always been there: the renewed Church is a continuation of the Synagogue. Different phases can be distinguished in the realization thereof related to the type of preaching. The Church, as we know it today, has been gradually added to Judaism, beginning with the conversion of the Roman centurion. After decades of evangelism, it turned out that Judaism's noble olive tree would not bear fruit. At that moment the divine gardener decides to cut off her branches, except for the wild twigs recently added to the root, those of paganism, and also leave the little 'remnant' untouched, that of converted Judaism, to which the Apostle Paul also belonged. Until then, Paul had been the preacher for both Jews and pagans. Only after that episode does he become the exclusive preacher for paganism. The previously grafted branches and the remnant may then continue to grow under his inspiring leadership, and that of the other apostles too, into a splendid crown.

25.112 – Paul, Apostle ‘first’ to the Jews and then to the Gentiles

The key to understanding Israel's place within the renewed covenant in the early days of Christianity is found in the “Book of Acts of the Apostles”. The primary focus in the texts is on Israel as from the very beginning, when the disciples ask Jesus if for ‘this time’ the kingdom to Israel would be restored, until the end of the book, when God's verdict is declared that Israel is ‘not’ going to be converted and that salvation goes henceforth to the Gentiles. After Jesus resurrection and just before his ascent to heavens his disciples ask Him: “*Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?*” Apparently Jesus had ‘not’ informed them during his teaching that Judaism would in the future begin to oppose the new messianism - later called Christianity. But that rejection had not yet taken place. First the preaching had to come. It had to be convincing, which would not have been the case if the apostles had foreseen failure. Yet, just before his Crucifi-

xion, Jesus had already indicated that the Jews would not listen, saying: “*They will put you out of the synagogues.*” (John 16: 2) But that this was definitive and universal was not evident. So there was still hope. The Jews got another chance because God’s love goes to the limit; explores all possibilities. However, all in good time, for there is a time of sowing and a time of harvesting. When asked whether the kingdom would be restored to Israel “*at this time*”, Jesus gave an evasive answer, indicating the outpouring of the Holy Spirit: “*You shall receive power when the Holy spirit has come upon you, and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.*” To the end implied the Jewish communities that were scattered over the whole known earth in the so-called diaspora. The Jews were the almost exclusive target group in the early days of the preaching work. Amy-Jill Levine rightly notes “*if Jesus had been so explicit about the universal mission of his disciples [that also comprised the pagans], then [Biblical] passages depicting the hesitancy of the various early Christians toward approaching the Gentiles become difficult to explain.*” ¹⁵⁴⁾ It illustrates that in the early stages, the Evangelization was focussed on the Jews, the children of Abraham.



In short, the Book of Acts is about Israel being called and about their rejection of that calling. Sure, on occasion, so tells the narration, when one synagogue rejected Paul’s gospel, he continued to preach in that same town to the benefit of the Gentiles. But upon entering the next town on his travel, he first went to its local synagogue. Therefore, the Book of Acts as such is insufficient to make a coherent narrative of the early Christian communities as the precursor of the Christian Church as it came to be, though it is not devoid of the Gentile element (for ‘Gentile’ always read ‘non-Jewish’). Viewed in this way, the Book of Acts is actually a thoroughly Jewish book.

25.113 – For I speak to the Gentiles Only

Decades later, after many church communities in the Greek world were founded by Paul (Acts 20:1-6; 24:17), he wants to travel to Jerusalem with funds raised, to express the

154) “The Social and Ethnic Dimensions of Matthean Social History” by Amy-Jill Levine - Edwin Mellen Publisher # 1988 (p. 18). She is a professor of New Testament and Jewish studies at Vanderbilt University Divinity School in Nashville U.S.A.

solidarity of the Gentile believers with the Jewish people, their bounteous mother. By then he must have concluded that active evangelism to Judaism as a group had become meaningless. This is alluded to in his letter to the Christians of Rome, also called the letter to the Romans, which he wrote when he was about to end his apostolate in Asia Minor and Greece. (Rom. 15:25) He writes: *"Now I am [only] addressing you who are from the Gentiles."* (Rom. 11:13) It should be noted that at Paul's conversion he had been given apostleship to the Gentile region, according to his effusion in the letter to the Galatians 1:5-16: *"When He, who had predestinated me from the womb, called me through his grace, He resolved to reveal his Son to me that I might preach Him among the Gentiles."* And again, but now in Galatians 2:9: *"James, Cephas, and John (...) gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, as token that we should go into [the region of] the Gentiles, and they into [the region of] the circumcised [the Jews]."* It is a matter of priority in the first and most important period of Paul's mission: in the Diaspora, first the Jews and then the Gentiles. Only after Paul had come to the vital insight that the preaching to the Jews had become meaningless (not wanting to hear, God made their ears heavy, after all means were explored - a divine judgment), and then only he says: *"Now I am [only] addressing you who are from the Gentiles."* The addition of the word 'only' serves to put Paul's effusion in the letter to the Galatians in a logical context. Remarkably, the end of Paul's mission to the Jews meant that the proclamation of the 'new doctrine' no longer took place from then on in synagogues. Of course the preaching did not stop to Jews on a personal basis, because the message of salvation may not be withheld if someone is willing to listen.

It is helpful to consider the details of Paul's journey to Jerusalem, quoted above. After celebrating Easter in Philippi, Paul continues his journey trying to be in Jerusalem before Pentecost. On the way he stops in Miletus where he addresses the people: *"Now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there."* In the same speech he declares: *"I testified to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."* The journey continues to Caesarea, where Agabus prophesies about Paul: *"So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt, and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles (the Romans)."* Upon arrival in Jerusalem he greets James and the elders with the words: *"You see, brother, how many myriads of Jews there are who have believed, and they are all zealous for the law."*

His arrival in Jerusalem provoked an uproar in which he threatened to perish, but fortunately he was freed by Roman soldiers. When the commander Claudius Lysias heard of an attack planned against Paul, he had him taken to Governor Antonius Felix (52-61). After being detained there for two years, his successor Porcius Festus (61-62), in consultation with King Herod Agrippa, sent Paul on to Rome.¹⁵⁵ In his plea to Agrippa, Paul related how God called him at the time and how Jesus spoke to him in a vision: *"I have delivered you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you (to His own people and to the Gentiles), to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light."*

25.114 – The Parables of the Fig Tree and the 'four preachings'

The situation had changed dramatically after a number of years as shown by Paul's speech after his arrival in Rome, in which he quotes from Isaiah 6:9-10 (this brings us

155) The date of Felix's recall and replacement by Porcius Festus is disputed. The earliest proposed date for the start of his term is the year 55/56, while the latest is 61, as proposed by the Encyclopædia Britannica of 1910 (pp. 892 ff), under 'Bible'. Why I prefer that date has to do with 'nice numbers', because now Paul was imprisoned in the year 59, exactly 40 years after the start of the mission of John the Baptist.

to the end of the Book of Acts: (Acts 28:25-28)

«« The Holy Spirit spoke rightly through Isaiah the prophet unto your fathers:
“Go to this people and say: hearing you will hear, and shall not understand, and seeing you will see, and not perceive. For the heart of this people has grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them.” Therefore let it be known to you that the salvation of God has been sent to the gentiles, and **they will hear**. »»

Some would like to place the dividing line here rather than at the end of Paul’s mission to Greece, because the above speech was addressed to the Jewish community in Rome. That was after he testified to them from early morning until late evening about the expectation that lived in him. He did so at their express request, because they said: “*for concerning this (Jewish) sect, we know that it is spoken against everywhere.*” (Acts 28:22) The reason he invited them was a different one. It was to hear whether they wanted to press charges against him like the Jews did in Jerusalem. (see Acts 28:19-20) The discussion was at his home, where he was under house arrest, and not in a synagogue, which had brought him so often into conflict with the Jewish authorities, leading to five times thirty-nine lashes with a whip and one attempt to stone him to death.

The reason for Paul’s conflict with his Jewish ‘brothers’ in Rome was primarily about doctrinal issues, but not only. To discover other points of conflict between the rabbinic authorities and the Judeo-Christians, of which Paul was a prominent member, we can turn to Stephen’s speech (Acts 6), which showcases a lack of confidence in the ancient leadership. More than that, it is a clash of authority with an accusation of the worst kind; Stephen’s speech did not address any point of contention or theological principle. That same clash of authority is felt by the rulers of our time who unscrupulously persecute Christians, even if they belong to the lowest classes. The clash boils down to the question of the persecuted: “Who is your God, the evil intent of this world, or is it Jesus Christ to whom we adhere?” If your answer concerns the former, you have no control over us in essential matters of faith and morals, for our authority is higher than yours.

Considering that, I would rather draw the dividing line in accordance with what was stated in the letter to the Romans, written a few years earlier. Striking in the above quoted text is the use of the future tense in “*they will hear*”, which indicates a transition. Now the good news was proclaimed exclusively to the Gentiles, the goyim, or nations, implying a fundamental change. From then on the Jews were no longer a prime focus of attention in his preaching. The cutting off of Judaism, of which the letter to the Romans speaks of, was already foretold by Jesus in his parable of the barren fig tree:

«« A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came seeking fruit on it, and he found none. Then said he to the keeper of his vineyard: Look for three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none. Cut it down. Why does it use up the ground? But he answered and said to him: Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig about it and dung it. And if it bears fruit, well. But if not, after that you’ll cut it down. »» (Luke 13:6-9)

A note made by the author of the gospel of Mark relates to it, for he says “*the time for figs was not yet.*” (Mark 11:13) But when? Now we can answer that. Then it was still shrouded in mystery. Speaking about the time of establishment of the Kingdom of Israel, Christ again turns his disciples’ attention to the fig tree: “*Now learn this parable from the fig tree. When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near.*” (Mt. 24:32-33) It is clear from this that the parable of the fig tree refers to a temporary cut-off, albeit for an exceptionally long time in our human view. The trunk is cut, but the root is spared. And it has begun to sprout in the days of the

return of God's people to the land of their fathers! The story in Matthew 21:18-19, that fits in with the parable of Luke, goes as follows:

«« 'Now in the morning, as He returned to the city, He was hungry. And seeing a fig tree by the road, He came to it and found nothing on it but leaves, and said to it: *"Let no fruit grow on you unto the age (ayon)."* Immediately the fig tree withered away. »»

Unto the age is commonly translated with *"let no fruit grow on you ever again"*, which means 'never'. But that misleads the reader. It says 'this ayon' in the Greek original text in the sense of 'this season'. God divides the history of his salvatory interventions into distinct eras, typified by the Hebrew 'olam' or the Greek 'ayon', words that also mean world. Conclusion: The right season had not yet arrived. Yet there is respite, because first the roots are dunged and the soil is digged about, that is to say, confronted with the glad tidings of the new messianicism, that of the coming Reign of Peace. 'Coming' should be understood literally, but after their rejection there was an adjournment in terms of two (millennial) seasons. That prior to that adjournment (only in the year 59) the coming Reign of Peace was also very near in human terms, is evident from Jesus' instruction when He sent the twelve out at the time He preached on earth:

«« These twelve apostles Jesus sent out and commanded them: Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans. But go rather to the lost sheep of the House of Israel. And as you go, preach: ***"The kingdom of heaven is at hand!"*** »» (Mt. 10:5-7)

In these parables the fig tree stands central and not without a cause, for it depicts the ideal past and the hope of future peace, based on the texts of 1 Kings 4:5 and Micah 4:3-4, which corresponds to Joel 2:22-23, where the teacher of righteousness is mentioned: *"They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and shall not learn war anymore. Then every man will be sitting under his vine and under his fig tree and will not be frightened by anyone."* In the Old Testament, figs are identified with the nation of Israel. Israel appears closely related to the Reign of Peace. Hosea wrote: *"I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness,¹⁵⁶ I saw your fathers as the first ripe in the fig tree in her first time."* (Hos. 9:10) Also Jeremiah received a similar vision of two baskets of figs, which represent Israel: *"Like these good figs, so will the God of Israel acknowledge them that are carried away captive of Judeah."* (Jer. 24:5)

The parable of the fig tree tells: *"For three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree."* The usual explanation is that this refers to Jesus' public life, which lasted more than three years, and telling this story his preaching had ended. Put differently, there was no point to continue the preaching. The time had come for the Sacrifice of the Cross. This explanation may be correct but, as so often with parables, several layers can be discovered. These three 'years' can also be seen as a reference to the three stages of evangelization, starting with John the Baptist, who started his mission in the year 19 AD. His preaching was so impressive that some of the people thought he was the promised messiah. After about three and a half years, he was succeeded by Jesus, of whom John the Baptist said that he was not even worthy to take off his sandals. The

¹⁵⁶) The New Testament vineyard parables are related to the judgment on Jerusalem. In the Old Testament readings the vine has a meaning that is similar to the fig tree. They are often mentioned together. As an additional meaning, 'wine' refers to Christ's bloody sacrifice of the Cross and also to God's wrath: "...to give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. (...) The angel threw the vine into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trampled outside the city, and blood came out of the winepress." (Rev. 16:19; 14:19-20) Indeed, Christ drank the cup to the dregs, He who has offered Himself for a guilt and propitiation offering.

second preaching, that of Jesus, was more glorious than that of John and lasted until 26 AD, until his Crucifixion. In his day, Jesus is assisted by his disciples who were allowed to evangelize only the lost sheep of the House of Israel; and at that stage certainly not the Gentiles. After Jesus' ascension to heaven, He is succeeded by the apostles, in which a short time later Paul is going to play a prominent role. Prior to that he had been one of the fanatical persecutors of the first Judeo-Christians. This preaching was even more glorious than the second one, thanks, of course, to the merits of Jesus' Sacrifice of the Cross (and that activity would continue to our present times). That is the deeper meaning of: *"You shall receive power when the Holy spirit has come upon you, and you shall be witnesses to Me"*, being the fulfillment of the prophecy of John the Baptist: *"He [my successor] will baptize you in Holy Spirit and with fire."* (Mt. 3:11) During the First Pentecost after the Crucifixion, all were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak different languages according to the Spirit's prompting. Then Peter arose and lifted up his voice: *"Jewish men, and all that dwell in Jerusalem: No, these men are not drunk, for it is only the third hour of the day."* (Again the number 3) Besides, there is also a fourth preaching, which has been preserved till much later, near the threshold of Christ's Return and the coming Reign of Peace, when there will be an outpouring, and a much greater one, of the Holy Spirit, as foretold by the Prophet Joel, referred to by Peter when explaining the outpouring of the First Pentecost:

«« It shall come to pass in the last days, says the Lord, that I will pour out of my Spirit on all flesh. Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams. And on my menservants and on my maidservants I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they shall prophesy. I will show wonders in heaven above and signs in the earth beneath: blood and fire and vapor of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome Day of the Lord. Then it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the Name of the Lord shall be saved! »» (Acts 2:17-21)

In view of the Reign of Peace, now in the twentieth century, it was only logical that the Roman Catholic Church took up the theme of "The New Evangelization," which was initiated by a synod under Pope Paul VI. In 1974, this led to the publication of an encyclical entitled "Evangelii Nuntiandi" (the proclamation of the Gospel). Cardinal Wojtyła, later Pope John Paul II (1978-2005), was intensively involved in the preparation of that document. In "Redemptoris Missio" from 1990 (mission of the Redeemer), John Paul II presented a new synthesis of the Church's teaching about Evangelization in our modern times. The pope's call to a new Evangelization is a prophetic and revolutionary calling to all believers. At the approach of the third millennium, Pope John Paul II was re-directing and re-focusing the Church's priorities. John Paul II proclaimed *"the moment has come to commit all of the Church's energies to a new Evangelization and to the mission 'ad gentes' (to the nations). No believer in Christ, no institution of the Church can avoid this supreme duty: to proclaim Christ to all peoples."* (Redemptoris Missio 3) That initiative has come to an end with Bergoglio's takeover in 2013, who calls himself Pope Francis. Yet there will be an unstoppable Evangelization as an outgrowth of the Enlightenment of Conscience, also called The Warning. This last Evangelization can be seen as the fourth preaching in the history of the Church, the third having continued uninterruptedly from the time of the Pentecostal Outpouring of the Holy Spirit up to our present time.

25.115 – The Church, One Body

Concerning the relation between the Church visible and invisible, which together make up the body of the Church, I like to start this chapter with a quote from the splendid "Parochial and Plain Sermons" of the great Cardinal John Henry Newman:

«« The Church of Christ, as Scripture teaches, is a visible body, invested with, or - I may say - existing in invisible privileges. (...) In the next world this whole Church will be brought together in one, whenever its separate members lived, and then, too, all its unsound and unfruitful members will be dropped (broken off), so that nothing but holiness will remain in it. (...) Properly speaking, the One Church is the whole body gathered together from all ages, so that the Church of this very age (or of the first age) is but part of it. (...) “What is meant”, you may then ask, “by the Church in one age being the same as the Church in another?” — plainly this, that there is no real line of demarcation between them, that the one is but the continuation of the other. (...) No harm can come of the distinction of the Church into Visible and Invisible, while we view it as, on the whole, but one in different aspects – as Visible, because consisting for its life and strength upon unseen influences and gifts from Heaven. This is not really to divide into two, any more than to discriminate - as they say - between concave and convex, is to divide a curve line, which looked at outwardly is convex, but looked at inwardly, concave. »» (sermon 16)

Cardinal Newman said that in the world to come the entire Church will be gathered into one, regardless of the time the individual members have lived. Remarkably enough, and according to the papal instruction in *Lumen Gentium* from 1964, the individual members include the ‘separatists’ who are somehow mysteriously associated with the one and true Church. Paragraph 16 of this dogmatic constitution reads:

«« Those who have not yet received the Gospel are related to the People of God in various ways (cf. S. Thomas, *Summa Theol.* III, q8, a3 ad 1). There is, first, that [Hebrew] People to which the covenants and promises were made, and from which Christ was born according to the flesh (Rom. 9: 4-5): in view of the divine choice, they are a people most dear for the sake of the fathers, for the gifts and the calling of God are not repented of. (Rom. 11: 28-29) But the plan of salvation also includes those who acknowledge the Creator, in the first place amongst whom are the Muslims: these profess to hold the faith of Abraham, and together with us they adore the one, merciful God, mankind’s judge on the last day.¹⁵⁷⁾ Nor is God remote from the others, who in shadows and images seek the unknown God, since He gives to all men life and breath and all things (Acts 17: 25-28), and since the Saviour wills all men to be saved. (1 Tim. 2:4) Those who, through no fault of their own, do not know the Gospel of Christ or his Church, but who nevertheless seek God with a sincere heart, and, moved by grace, try in their actions to do his will as they know it through the dictates of their conscience – those too may achieve eternal salvation. Nor shall divine providence deny the assistance necessary for salvation to those who without any fault of theirs, have not yet arrived at an explicit knowledge of God, and who, not without grace, strive to lead a good life. »»

157) The expression that “the Muslims (...) adore together with us the merciful God” is difficult to accept. It would have been more correct to have stated that they too, in their way, are seeking God. We should bear in mind that the worldwide Islamic terrorism had not started yet and that people were still insufficiently aware of the Islamic doctrine, for which the Koran is a very inadequate source; at the time the Arabic acts of violence in Israel were seen as a local affair and not as an Islamic problem. The Third World country prelates, like the cardinal of Indonesia, insisted during the Vatican Council to have this formulation of the Islamic faith in the document in view of their favorable experience with it. It was indeed favorable, because in their countries the Muslims by then had not fully shaken off their colonial past. Colonialism had removed power, holy war and territorial control from Islam, leaving it as a benign force that focussed on prayer and good deeds.

This exposition does not invalidate the teaching brought forward by Pope Pius IX in his encyclical from 1863, called “Quanto conficiamur”, in which he exposed that there is no salvation outside the Roman Church, a view already voiced a generation earlier in the writings of the Augustinian Anne Catherine Emmerich. She too contended that salvation is only possible ‘through the Sacraments’ of the Roman Church, to which she added that also they who do not belong to the visible body of the Church may be linked to it in various ways, if only by the fruits that are being picked from it, though many times this goes unnoticed and untraceable. It cannot be otherwise that those who agitate against the Church and persecute Her, deny for themselves the fruits thereof, although afterwards for them her fruits will still be there for the asking.

In the formative years of the Church it was different. John the Baptist had his followers who, like Jesus, were active in having the flock grow. Finally, growth was due to the preaching work following the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.¹⁵⁸⁾ (Acts 2) All this fitted under the theme of initial church and community formation. The mystical unity of the Church ‘in Christ’ is something else and was born ‘in Christ’ on the Cross which is sealed over and over again in baptism for those concerned. (cf. 1 Cor. 12:13) However, we are now talking about the visible institution, founded on the Apostle Peter. In that sense, Peter is Christ’s vicar, not substitute, like all (legal) popes afterwards. (Mt. 16:18) Jesus calls him Kephass which, like Peter, means ‘piece of rock’. (John 1:42) Only after Jesus’ ascension to heaven was his deputy role realized, firstly with regard to the visible part of the Church and secondly with regard to the ‘papal pronouncements’. Striking is the similarity in sound between Kephass and Kaiaphas, the officiating Jewish High Priest. Peter succeeded him, as it were, because the Sanhedrin as a sacred and guiding institution had been dismissed...

However, the present church ‘from the Gentiles’ did not take on a recognizable form until the close of Paul’s apostolate in Asia Minor and Greece, before the epistles to the Romans and Corinthians were written, and probably after the epistles to the Galatians and Thessalonians. At that point some of the original branches were broken off by God of the noble olive tree (Judaism) and a vital rest remained together with the wild shoots, that had been grafted in among them at an earlier time, to be partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree. And only then Paul became exclusively the apostle to the Gentiles.

Earlier he should be considered the apostle to the Jews first, and then the Gentiles. He was truly a most extraordinary man. He was the only scholar among the apostles and endowed with one of the clearest and strongest minds. “*A pure-blooded Hebrew and as far as keeping the Jewish Law, Paul was a Pharisee.*” (Phil. 3:5) Yet at the same time he was a native Hellenist (belonging to the Greek culture) and also a Roman ‘citizen’. As an apostle for the Jews he was the most suitable candidate, as he himself confessed: “*I am a Jew, born in Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up here in Jerusalem as a student of Gamaliel. I received strict instruction in the Biblical law of our forefathers and was a zealot for God as all of you are today.*” (Acts 22:3) Tarsus had a university that ranked with Athens and Alexandria as a Hellenistic center of prime importance. In Tarsus, the Jews were known for their strict observance of the Biblical law, more than anywhere else. He combined, so to speak, the three great identities of the ancient world. Gamaliel, his teacher, was the grandson of famous Rabbi Hillel and occupied a position in the

158) The outpouring of the Holy Ghost and its fruits in bringing conversion, it should be noted, did not occur as if the apostles were merely bystanders. Only by following their Master’s example in continuous fasting, prayer and personal sacrifice the Holy Spirit responded by drawing many to the Christian faith. How do I know? Why would it have been any different then than it is today?

Sanhedrin (the Jewish Council) and it is relevant to mention him as teacher. His importance is seen in the well-known saying: *“When Rabban Gamaliel the elder died, the glory of the Thora ceased and purity and abstinence died.”* (Sotah 9:15) Consequently, Paul could argue with the Pharisees on their own intellectual level, and address the Greeks in their beautiful language with the force of their newfound logical reasoning. At the same time he could safely travel the whole Empire as a ‘Civis romanus sum’ (Roman citizen). Not that Paul thought of himself as a great preacher. On purpose he sometimes delivered a simple message, especially when speaking to the common people, like those to whom he wrote this letter:

«« Christ sent me to tell the Good News, and to tell it without using the language of human wisdom, in order to make sure that Christ’s death on the Cross is not robbed of its power. (...) When I came to you, my friends, to preach God’s secret truth, I did not use big words and great learning. For while I was with you, I made up my mind to forget everything except Jesus Christ and especially his death on the Cross. So when I came to you, I was weak and trembled all over with fear [this way of preaching went against everything he had learned from home]. My teaching and message were not delivered with skillful words of human wisdom, but with convincing proof of the power of God’s Spirit. »» (1 Cor. 1:17, 2:1-4)

25.116 – God’s Plan of Salvation Revealed

In this perspective, Acts is on a fundamentally different level from the Gospels, the later epistles, and the prophetic Book of Revelation. The present church did not come into being, as is often thought, at the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at the great Pentecost – that provided the means. The book of Acts conforms to Jesus’ commission to be a witness according to the ongoing call that began with John the Baptist: *“Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!”*, as well as: *“Even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”* (Mt. 3:2, Luke 3:9) This theme comes back in the letter to the Romans: (Rom. 11:16-18, 23-24)

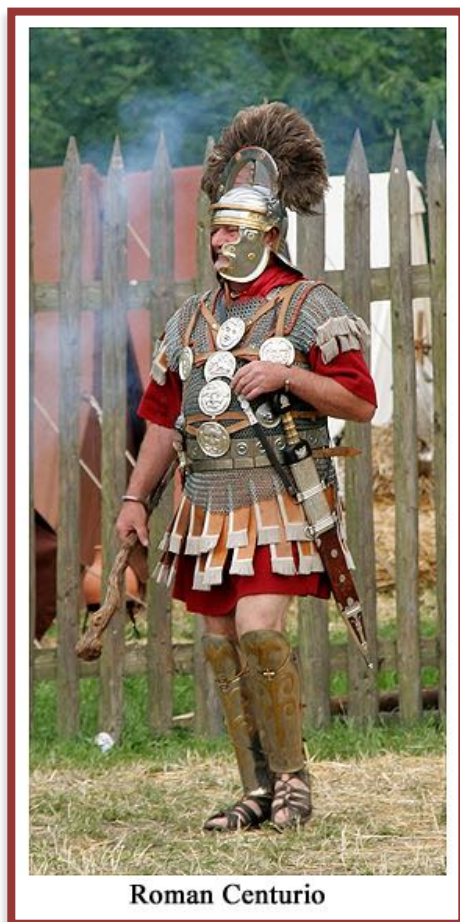
«« If the root is holy, so are the branches. And if some of those branches were broken off, and you, being a wild shoot, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree, do not boast against the branches. (...) God however is able to graft the broken off branches in again. For if you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into the noble olive tree, how much easier will these, who are natural branches, be grafted back into their own olive tree? »»

The olive tree, again such a symbol! The anointing with olive oil has a long history. Throughout the Old Testament, anointing signifies the bringing to power, understanding and holiness of the anointed persons, their dedication to God, and it also represents divine authority. Anointing with oil is associated with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in both the Old and New Testament. (i.e. 1 Sam. 16:13; Is. 61:1; 1 John 2:20; Acts 10:38) The olive tree therefore symbolizes spiritual blessings, here borne by the root of the noble olive tree to which Israel normally belongs and to which part of Israel has already been re-grafted in our recent history (written in 2019).

What is striking in the Romans letter is that the new branches do not replace the old ones. It turns out that the new branches were grafted in before the old ones, belonging to the Jews, were broken off. After the old and withered branches were broken off, the new shoots, plus the old viable remnant from Judaism, continue to grow independently. **So there is no schism, as some would like to suggest, for a schism presupposes the tearing apart of two living parts. Besides, it is God himself who, as a punishment, broke off the old withered branches, albeit temporary.** (Rom. 11:8-9) The hardened Jews were then,

as it were, banished to the Court: they were denied access to the Temple. We cannot speak of the birth of the new church 'from the Gentiles' at the time of the breaking off, for it has been a gradual development. What shall we call it then? I propose: the independence or separation of the new church after a period of patronage. Historical developments are usually complex. Why violate reality with extreme categories?

The new church 'from the Gentiles' has been gradually added to Judaism, beginning with the conversion of the Roman army officer, narrated in Acts 10. The earlier conversion from Acts 8 of the chief treasurer of the ruler of Ethiopia does not fully count for the increase of faithful from paganism, for the Ethiopian royal family traditionally had blood ties with the House of David. A thousand years earlier, Queen Sheba visited wise King Solomon, son of David. From their union came forth a son, Menelik. His descendants were used to call themselves "*the glorious Lion of the Tribe of Judah*" (Ethiopian Constitution prior to 1975, art. 2). Therefore the chief treasurer of Acts 8 was, as this tradition calls for, on pilgrimage to Jerusalem. True Gentiles did not do that.



Roman Centurio

The conversion of the Roman army officer, Cornelius the Centurion, is a peculiar one from the point of view of the intermediate position he occupied with regard to regular Judaism. He, too, was not a 'true heathen', but more authentic in that respect than the chief treasurer of Ethiopia. He was a Yirei Hashem or Yirei Shamayim, a so-called 'God-fearing' like that centurion from Capernaum who came to Jesus to heal his servant. Luke reports that a delegation of Jewish elders came to do a good word for him. "*They begged Jesus earnestly: 'The one for whom You should do this is deserving, for he loves our (Jewish) nation. He has even built for us a synagogue.'*" (Luke 7:1-5) Judaism enjoyed a high status at the time and many from paganism, perhaps millions, chose to adhere to the monotheistic faith without having to convert to Judaism. The extent to which they decided to follow Judaism was entirely free and left to the 'God-fearing'.¹⁵⁹⁾ The first 'God-fearing' is Jethro, Moses' father-in-law. Another beautiful example is the army officer of the king of Aram. He was a Gentile who lived in God's favor, for God had given him victory. After being healed by the prophet Elisha, he exclaimed: "*Now I know for sure that there is only a God in Israel and nowhere else on the earth.*" He took home two loads of earth for a place of sacrifice to offer sacrifices to Yahweh alone, and he renounced all other gods. (2 Kings 5) In the inter-testamentary period, some God-fearing men, out of

love for the God of Israel, even allowed themselves to be circumcised without joining Judaism, but that will not have been many. There were those who joined Judaism, but they were only accepted as full Jews after heavy preparation. Afterwards, they were no

159) Louis H. Feldman has studied the case of the Yirei Hashem in depth in "Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World" – Princeton University Press # 1993, as well as in "The Omnipresence of the God-Fearers" – Biblical Archaeology Review 12:5 # Sept/Oct 1986 (pp. 58-69). See also Saul Lieberman: "Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World" – The Jewish Theological Seminary of America # 1994 (pp. 77-90) and Bernard J. Bamberger: "Proselytism in the Talmudic Period" – KTAV Publishing House # 1968 (pp. 133-140).

longer termed Yirei Hashem. There is a synagogue inscription in the Roman city of Aphrodisias (not far from Izmir in Turkey) with a list of moneylenders where the God-fearing men are listed separately, which proves that they attended synagogue services. The same is confirmed in James's speech to the church meeting of apostles and elders: *"I believe that undue burdens should not be placed on the converts from paganism. After all, in every city the law of Moses is read and preached in the synagogue."* (paraphrase Acts 15:19-21) This church meeting is also called the Council of Jerusalem, a council because in verse 28 it is spoken of: *"For we and the Holy Spirit have decided..."* Obviously, this group of 'Gentiles' could effortlessly join Christianity in view of their natural affinity with it. Nor did they have to explain their move to the established Jewish order, which would have complicated matters. From this perspective, Acts 10 appears in a very different light:

«« In Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, who was the captain of a group of soldiers called 'The Italian Unit'. He was a very religious man; he was God-fearing and so was everyone else who lived in his house. He had given a lot of money to the poor [especially the Jews] and was always praying to God [the God of the Jews]. One afternoon at about three o'clock, Cornelius had a vision. He saw an angel from God coming to him and calling him by name. Cornelius was surprised and stared at the angel. Then he asked: *"What is this all about?"* The angel answered: *"God has heard your prayers and knows about your gifts to the poor. Now send some men to Joppa for a man named Simon, also called Peter."* When the angel had left, Cornelius called in two of his servants and one of his pious soldiers [also a 'God-fearing person'!]. He explained everything and sent them off to Joppa. (...) (When the envoys had come to Peter they told him): *"Captain Cornelius is a good man, a God-fearing one, and is liked by all the Jewish people. One of God's holy angels told Cornelius to send for you, so he could hear what you have to say."* (After Peter had went to the house of Cornelius and heard what he had to say, he said:) *"Now I am certain that God treats all people alike. God is pleased with everyone who is God-fearing and does right, no matter what nation they come from. This is the same message that God gave to the people of Israel when he sent Jesus Christ, the Lord of all, to offer peace to them."* »»

When the the third preaching to the Jewish people eventually turns out to be fruitless, the command to bring them the good news is canceled. The third preaching now focuses on the Gentiles. As Jesus had predicted, the Jewish people would not respond to the time of grace and were therefore left to themselves, with really dramatic consequence. (Luke 19:41-44) On this dividing line of the meaninglessness of the preaching, Paul becomes an apostle for paganism alone and only then does the adjournment come into effect. Usually the end of the Book of Acts is placed in the early 60s, which I can relate to. However, the line of demarcation between Judaism and Christianity is two years earlier, when Paul was imprisoned by Felix. I feel free to situate this in the year 59, 40 years after the start of the preaching by John the Baptist. That fits nicely, because that is a very common Biblical number. God's Will for the church of the Gentiles is revealed in a far greater and more splendid light in the epistles after the line of separation had become an established fact, according to the promise: *"That you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height — to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge that you may be filled with all the fullness of God."* (Eph. 3:17-19) In this way God's plan of salvation for the world was being revealed.

Paul preached in Rome for two years under house arrest. That is the end of the Book of Acts, but not of his mission. Reverend Hoite Slagter comments about the letters of Paul to the Gentiles: ¹⁶⁰⁾

Circumcision Practice in the Second Temple Period

The term 'uncircumcised' is not necessarily to be taken literal. The Hebrew *Orlah* indicates the foreskin of the organ, but also describes the lips of a person whose speech is not fluent (Ex. 6:12, 30), or the heart and ear of a person who will not listen to reason (Jer. 6:10; 9:25). And in this way we can understand Acts 7:51: *"You stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You are always resisting the Holy Spirit."*

In the time of Christ it was the practice under many Jews to only circumcise the firstborn, and even that was not done. This weakening of the practice of the faith was a result of the Hellenization of society. It is remarkable that neither the Mishna nor the Gemara has a separate section on circumcision, and yet it is an extremely important rite. And so it is difficult to know the exact practice in Jesus' time. The obligations of a father to his son were defined at the time as: 1) circumcision, 2) redemption of the firstborn, 3) teaching him a trade and 4) getting him a suitable spouse. By means of a contraction of the first and second obligation it may have been tolerated, by force of the lax practice, that it would not be sinful to only circumcise the firstborn. This would have equate circumcision to a sacrifice for the firstborn. Luisa Piccarreta, the little daughter of the Divine Will, tells on two occasions, when discussing the circumcision of Jesus, that in those days it was lawful to only circumcise the firstborn, which supports the foregoing.



Luisa Piccarreta

The degree of Hellenization among Jews during this period remains unclear, but it was not trivial. In the first half of the second century before Christ, Jesus Ben Sira composed a response to this type of thinking, preserved to us in the book *Sirach*, which emphasizes loyalty to traditional values. Jubilees chapter 15, written somewhat later, at times delivers a polemic in support of such basic practices as circumcision. It insists twice that for 'all' male infants the circumcision rite must be performed, which insistence seems unnecessary in view of the clear commandment in Scripture where it is only said once. The 2007 *Encyclopaedia Judaica* under Circumcision tells that *"in Hellenistic times, Jews widely neglected circumcision."* (Jub. 15:33–34) Confirming that that that was the case, the Talmud tells that Jerusalem fell to the Romans and the Temple was destroyed because Jews *"broke the covenant by failing to circumcise their sons"*. (Menahot 53b)

Hellenistic and Roman societies widely practiced public nakedness. But they abhorred watching the denuded upper part of the penis, called the glans. Enjoying oneself in a Greek gymnasium or Roman bath, where nudity was *de rigueur*, was a popular and stylish pastime. Here politics were discussed and business deals concluded. Because a circumcised penis made someone an outcast, many young Jews decided to conceal their circumcision by drawing their foreskin forward (epispasm), which is impossible with the laying bare of the glans; in those times only the tip of the foreskin was cut, an operation called 'brit milah'. The 'bris' persisted for more than two millennia until the Bar Kochba Revolt (132 AD) when Jewish leadership introduced *peri'ah* (from the Greek *περί/peri*), or the laying bare of the glans, in order to curtail epispasm. This practice was emphasized in the supportive midrashic readings, constructed in order to base this practice on the Torah. It is said to consist of two different operations: 1) the blood of milah, which is the actual circumcision, and 2) the blood of the *peri'ah* incision. This is now general practice. *) Actually, *peri'ah* can be quite traumatic for the newborn as well as for its mother, who has to watch the whole operation; the milah is much more benign.

*) As late as the 12th century, the great scholar Maimonides stated that "anyone who elongates his foreskin (to conceal his circumcision) is denied his share in the world to come (the Millennium)." (Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Tesh. 3:6) This seems to indicate that at that time the *peri'ah* was not yet adopted everywhere, which indeed is more difficult to do than just the milah. And it is known that children died because of it.

«« Whoever reads Paul's letters in accordance with the order in which they were originally written will gain a better understanding of the meaning of these letters and God's purpose for them. Then you will see that only in Paul's late letters – letters written after the rejection of salvation by the Jewish people – is spoken about the mystery of the body of Christ. And everything Paul wrote before is in the light of God's plan for his people Israel. If we line up Paul's late letters, we get the following order: the Ephesians, the Colossians, Philemon [simultaneously or just after Colossians], Philippians, 1 Timothy, Titus, and finally 2 Timothy. Paul wrote the first four letters in this list from his first imprisonment in Rome. After his release, he wrote the First Timothy and the Letter to Titus. After this he was again taken prisoner and from his second imprisonment in Rome wrote his last letter: the second Timothy letter. »»

25.117 – No Proof to the Contrary

As concerns the thesis brought forward in the former sections there is no evidence to the contrary. Samuele Bacchiocchi says in his discussion of the early differentiation between Jews and Christians: ¹⁶¹⁾

«« In the year 49 AD the Emperor Claudius, according to the Roman historian Suetonius “*expelled the Jews from Rome as they were making constant disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus*” [a misspelling of ‘Christus’, the Latin name for Christ].¹⁶²⁾ The fact that on this occasion converted Jews like Aquila and Priscilla were expelled from the city together with the Jews [cf. Acts 18:2] proves, as Monseigneur Pierre Batiffol (1861-1929) observes: “*That [at the time] the Roman police had not yet come to distinguish the Christians from the Jews.*”¹⁶³⁾ Fourteen years later, however, Nero identified the Christians as being a separate entity, well distinguished from the Jews. The Emperor, in fact, according to [Roman Consul] Tacitus “*fastened the guilt [for arson upon them] and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abomination, called Christians by the populace.*”

(...) If initially Christians identified themselves with Jews to benefit from the protection which the Roman law accorded to the Jewish faith and customs, toward the sixties, as F. F. Bruce observes, “*it was no longer possible to regard Christianity as simply a variety of Judaism [except, then, for Judea and in particular Galilee,*¹⁶⁴⁾ *where practically all Christians were of Jewish birth]*.” Leonard Goppelt similarly remarks: “*In the imperial city Christians are distinguished from Jews by 64, but not as early as the year 49. The State's*

160) “De Brieven aan Filemon & Titus” (The Letters to Philemon & Titus) by H. B. Slagter – Everread Uitgevers, Wijk bij Duurstede # 2010 (p. 5).

161) “From Sabbath to Sunday - A Historical Investigation of the Rise of Sunday Observance in Early Christianity” by Dr Samuele Bacchiocchi – The Pontifical Gregorian University Press, Rome # 1977 (pp. 167-69). In his notes he refers to “The Spreading Flame” by F.F. Bruce - Eerdmans Pub. # 1954 (p. 140). Bruce quoted from Leonard Goppelt's “Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Times” # 1977 (p. 42 fn. 3). Batiffol was quoted by Ernest Renan in “The Antichrist” # 1892 (p. 20 fn. 6), which was quoted again by F.F. Bruce.

162) From the Life of Claudius 25:4. In the Life of Nero 16:2, Suetonius provides more insight into why the followers of ‘Chrestus’ were seen to cause disturbances, when he tells of the campaign against Roman Christians, launched in the year 64. These people he describes as a “a class of men given to a new and mischievous superstition”.

163) “Primitive Catholicism” by Mgr Pierre Batiffol – Longmans, Green & Co., London, New York # 1911 (p. 19) of which a reprint in 2010; revised and translated from the 5th French edition of “L’Église Naissante et le Catholicisme”.

recognition of their separate status occurred somewhere between these two dates according to the Roman sources.” The Jews themselves may have taken the initiative to dissociate from the Christians whose majority in the Roman Empire outside Judea and Galilee was now composed of ‘uncircumcised’.

The circumstances seem to have been favorable to force such a distinction particularly in Rome. After the year 62, in fact, Jewish influence was present in the imperial court in the person of the Empress Poppea Sabina, a Jewish proselyte and friend of the Jews, whom Nero married that year. Adolf Harnack [and later J. Zeiller] thinks that Nero, in order to exculpate himself from the people’s accusation of having provoked the fire [that ravaged large parts of Rome], at the instigation of the Jews put the blame on the Christians. It is a fact that, though the Jewish residential district of Trastevere was not touched by the fire, as Pierre Batiffol remarks (p. 20), *“the Jews were not suspected for an instant of having started it; but the accusation fell on the Christians: they were, then, notoriously and personally distinct from the Jews.”* »»

The quote of Batiffol is taken from the following passage:

«« If then, as is generally held, the Roman Jewries were deeply disturbed by the introduction of Christianity, ‘impulsore’ Chresto, the fact that Claudius reestablished order, by banishing the Jews from Rome – and with them the Christians, like Aquila and Priscilla – proves that the Roman police had not as yet come to distinguish the Christians from the Jews, or was unwilling to take cognizance of what distinguished them. Viewed in the same light, what occurred at Corinth at the same time or shortly after, is most significant. When St. Paul was dragged by Sostenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and by the Jewish Zealots before the proconsul – Annaeus Novatus Gallio, the brother of Seneca – and was charged with being an apostate Gedaliah from the Law, the proconsul said (Acts 18:12-17, cf. 23:29): *“Jews, if you were charging this man with a crime or some other wrong, I would have to listen to you. But since this concerns only words, names, and your own law, you will have to take care of it. I refuse to judge such matters.”* In Acts 24:5, the rhetorician Tertullos denounces to the governor Felix the apostle Paul as a leader of *“the seditious sect of the Nazarenes”*. For Tertullos (certainly at that time) Christianity is but a Jewish sect. »»

An interesting case occurs in the Talmud in, among others, the Abodah Zarah 16b-17a, which Dan Jaffé explores at length.¹⁶⁵⁾ He teaches religious history at Bar Ilan University and Ashkelon Academic College in Israel and thus is knowledgeable. The Talmudic passage from the Abodah Zarah 16b-17a reads in full:

«« When Rabbi Eliezer ben Hurcanus¹⁶⁶⁾ was captured by the government on charges of being a min [apostate], he was taken to the tribunal for questioning. The prosecutor said to him: “A sage like yourself should not engage himself

164) “Schismatics, Sectarians, Dissidents, Deviants: The First One Hundred Years of Jewish-Christian Relations” by Jack T. Sanders - SCM Press, London # 1993 (p. 61).

165) “Le Talmud et les Origines juives du Christianisme – Jésus, Paul et les judéo-chrétiens dans la littérature talmudique” (The Talmud and the Jewish roots of Christianity) by Dan Jaffé – Les Éditions du Cerf # 2007 (pp. 39-41, 53-54, 61-70). The quotations are from pp. 40 and 53-54; within rectangular brackets are from pp. 61-70.

166) Eliezer became known as Eliezer ha-Gadol (the Great) and was a disciple of Rabbi Johanan ben Zakkai and a colleague of Gamaliel II, whose sister he married. With reference to his halachitic proficiency and judicial impartiality, the saying of Deuteronomy 16:20: “You shall follow what is altogether just”, was explained: “Seek a reliable court: go after Rabbi Eliezer in Lydda, or after Johanan ben Zakkai in Beror Hel”. (Sanh. 32b)

in such a vain thing.” And he answered: “I trust Him who judges me.” The prosecutor thought that he meant him; he, however, meant the heavenly judge. And he said: “Because you trust in me, I swear by Dimissus (his idol) that you are set free from this accusation.” When Rabbi Eliezer returned home, his disciples surrounded him to console him, but he would not accept their consolations. Said Rabbi Aqiba to him: “Rabbi, allow me to say before you one of the things you taught me.” He answered: go ahead. Said he to him: “Rabbi, perhaps you heard words of minuth [religious deviance], which pleased you and therefore you were suspected and captured.” Answered he: “Aqiba, you have reminded me. It happened once that I walked in the upper market of Sepphoris [at the north of Nazareth] when I met one of the minim of Jeshua ha-notsri [Jesus the Nazarene],¹⁶⁷⁾ named Jacob, who came from Kephars Sechania, and he said to me: It is written in our Torah: Thou shalt not bring the hire of a harlot... (Deut. 23:19) What to think about it? May then a retiring room for the high priest be built from such kind of money?” And I kept silent. Said he to me: “So I was taught by Jeshua ha-notsri, who said: It is written: She gathered it of the hire of an harlot, and it shall be returned to the hire of an harlot. (Mich. 1:7) Hence, money that comes from a place of uncleanness, may be expended on a place of uncleanness.” - which explanation pleased me. It is for this that I was captured for minuth (heresy). I have transgressed what is written in our Law: Stay away from an outsider, who is a min! Don’t even go near the door of her house. (Prov. 5: 8) »»

Professor Martin Goodman was director of the Oxford Center for Hebrew and Jewish Studies from 2014 to 2018. He elaborates on the meaning and origin of the word ‘min’:

«« The fact that the tannaim [the scribes from after 70 AD] chose to use a new word of any kind to describe ‘deviants’, demands explanation, since the Bible has plenty of Hebrew words for wicked Jews. (...) Even more striking is the coinage of the term minuth, or heresy, since the creation of an abstract noun to denote a religious tendency was not otherwise common in tannaitic texts. (...) That these minim were reckoned by the tannaim to be wicked is clear enough from every reference to them. (...) However, it must be admitted that the precise meaning of the word min (singular of minim) is far from sure. (...) The method proposed by tannaitic rabbis to deal with minuth was essentially avoidance of contact. (...) Now, if such avoidance was wholly successful, one would expect heresies to have had no effect on the tannaim at all. But injunctions to avoid contact are only needed when contact would otherwise be probable. »»¹⁶⁸⁾

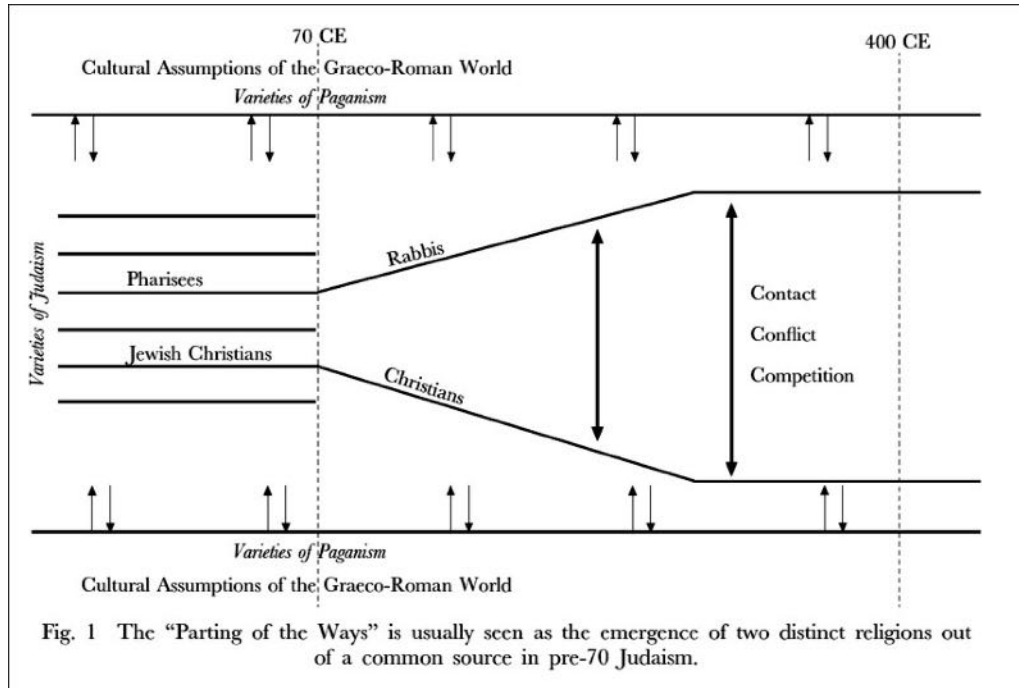
In his publication on the Jewish roots of Christianity, Dan Jaffé discusses how the Judeo-Christians – referred to as the ‘minim’ (deviants or apostates) in the much later written Talmud – had acquired during the Second Temple period a respectable place and identity within the socio-religious plurality so typical for Judaism at the time. He remarked:

«« This identity emerges when, for example, one looks at the history of the meeting between Rabbi Eliezer ben Hurcanus [then still young] and “Jacob the Min”. This Jacob the Minus, according to the Jewish historian Jozef Gedaliah Klausner (1874-1958), would be the same person as Jacob the Righteous, the very first bishop of Jerusalem. This one now throws himself on a Scriptural

167) In several places in the Talmud the same story is told, says the Tosephta Chulin 2:24, and each time “Yeshu’a son of Pantéra” is written instead of Yeshua ha-notsri. This is based on the slander that our beloved Lord and Savior would have sprung from an adulterous relationship with a Roman soldier named Pantéra.

168) “Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity - Collected Essays” by Martin Goodman - Brill, Leiden/Boston # 2007 (pp. 166-68, the figure of “Parting of Ways” is from p. 177).

interpretation of Deuteronomy 23:19, which clearly indicates that he was well acquainted with the exegetical methods used by the wise men. Moreover, the explicit mention of Jesus as the source of inspiration for his view indicates that he belonged to the Judeo-Christian circle. It should therefore be emphasized that he, a Jew, was undoubtedly at home in the exegetical arsenal employed in the world of the wise men, and thus he can discuss the Torah [Biblical law] with the utmost ease with the greatest scribe of his day: Rabbi Eliezer ben Hurcanus. The latter is, by the way, impressed by Jacob's explanation and he literally finds grace in his eyes. This story is important because it actually shows that the Judeo-Christians could provide an alternative approach, possibly on an equal footing with that of the wise men.



Scheme taken from the Internet (where 70 CE/AD is stated, should be instead 59 CE).

(...) During this meeting Rabbi Eliezer listens to Jacob, not as to a 'min' (apostate) who would have deviated from the right path, but as to another Jew who is able to elucidate to him a point of the 'halacha' (legal judgment) with a concept that comes from a master called Jesus the Nazarene (Jeshua ha-notsri). This fundamental aspect shows that for a period of time, around the 160's, nothing distinguished a Jew from a Judeo-Christian (in the pluriform society of that time, where the Temple, not yet destroyed, was the focal point). [After the loss of the Temple, however, pluralism had to give way to a much greater unity of thought, as it has eventually been reflected in the Talmud. In the Talmud, therefore, we will look in vain for a faithful account of the rise and fall of the Judeo-Christians with the frictions that this created.] In particular, speaking again of the meeting between Eliezer and Jacob, it was still permissible at the time to study and learn from a rabbi, such as Jesus the Nazarene.¹⁶⁹⁾ Here, then, we discover the condition of a free interpretation of the Torah, open to all, and especially the acceptance of the 'other' who may set a new direction for insight into some revealed text.

Much later, when circumstances had changed and with it the opinion of the wise men about the Judeo-Christians, Rabbi Eliezer regrets his meeting some decades earlier with Jacob the 'minus' [after being questioned by the Romans,

somewhere at the end of the first or early second century, on the basis of ‘minuth’, which in Talmudic terminology means ‘religious dissent’]. The ‘transition’ reveals itself dramatically: the Romans persecute the Christians and Rabbi Eliezer is suspected of being one of them. His old student Rabbi Akiba reminds him of that fateful meeting and exhorts him to regret it. »»»

Ancient literature bears witness to the fact that Judeo-Christians were in a declining position as from the time of the first Jewish war (66-70 AD). Set apart from the growing group of Christians from the Gentiles, after that war the Judeo-Christians were increasingly regarded by the latter as heretics. The reason why is not so obvious. Not having participated in the Jewish war, thereafter the Jews were not favorably disposed towards Christians in general. Therefore, I gather that those who still remained within the Jewish body espoused a different kind of Christianity, in fact ceased to be Christian. It seems logical that only those who believed that Jesus was ‘a’ messiah in accordance to the Talmudic Ben-Joseph or suffering servant type and did not practice things like the Holy Mass, were tolerated within the Jewish body. I read somewhere, without reference to a source, that this separate group lasted until the tenth century.

It is remarkable that in the Jewish tradition two messiahs are mentioned in the order the Christians are familiar with: the suffering one and the glorious one. The coming of these messiahs is expressed in several places, for instance in the Talmud tractates Sukka 51B, 52A and 53A. The first, namely Messiah Ben-Joseph (ben = son of), would be the suffering servant. He is even compared to the “*one whom they have pierced*”. (Zech. 12:10) Great mourning is required, says the Talmud, because of the killing. The second one, Messiah Ben-David, would come as a triumphant authority and saviour of his people, and would not be the same person as the first. It is stressed (in texts after the second century) that the suffering servant is different from the Christian Jesus, as the Jewish Ben-Joseph would come from a different tribe (Ephraim). Well, any argument is an argument, but not necessarily a good one.

25.118 – The Curtain Fell, but Not Forever

A forty-year term was already mentioned in connection with the mission of John the Baptist that began in the year 19. This number can be found again at the start of the Jewish War that erupted in 66, exactly forty years after the Crucifixion.¹⁷⁰⁾ In 70 AD the Temple was destroyed and the daily sacrifice was discontinued: the curtain had fallen.

But there is a continuation! To be situated in 1840, the year that coincides with the Jewish year 5600. Rabbi Judah Hai Alkalai saw it as his task to proclaim loud and clear – to those who would, and especially to those who would not listen – that this special year heralded the dawning of the messianic age. Others would rather call it the onset of labor with its birth pangs. Alkalai’s prophecy means that Isaiah 29:18 was being fulfilled: “*In that day the deaf shall hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness*”, which annulled the prophecy of verse 10, taken up by

169) Commenting on the Gospel of Matthew, Origenis says that “The first [Gospel], conceived in the Hebrew language, was written by Matthew (...) to the benefit of those who believed having come from Judaism.” As such, if true, it must have belonged to the corpus of Jewish literature. In the first decades after Jesus’ death on the cross, this must have strengthened the sentiment that the Judeo-Christians were an acceptable current within Judaism. Later, after the Judeo-Christians fled to Pella, around the year 66, at the outbreak of the ‘ha-Mered Ha-Gadol’ or Great Rebellion (66-70 AD), things changed, as it was seen as treason. In that war the Temple was destroyed.

170) See “Proofs of the Life and Death of Jesus”, a book by undersigned, which shows that Jesus was born during the census in 8 BC, and consequently was crucified in 26 AD, and it is also shown that John the Baptist’s mission began in the year 19 AD.

Paul in his letter to the Romans (11:8): *“God has poured on them a spirit of deep sleep, eyes that they should not see and ears that they should not hear, to this very day.”*

How marvellous are the ways of the Lord, for in the summer of 1840, under the impetus of the Member of Parliament, Lord Ashly, a public debate started *“to plant the Jewish people in the land of their fathers, which (it was stated) became a serious political consideration”*. Ashly was moved by a religious fervour of the purest kind; let it be understood, the fervour and zeal of an Anglican Christian who took the Biblical truths as eternal values. He believed the time had come for the Restoration of God’s ancient people as he used to call them. Remarkably, the Restoration also meant, in his view and that of quite a number of important persons, a mass conversion of the Jews to the Christian faith, to be brought about by missionary work. But here too there is an evolution that is still going on, so that we should not be surprised that this missionary work bore so little fruit at the time. But the beginning was there, and the end is in sight.

While Christian-Zionist initiatives strove unflinchingly until the end of the 19th century for the conversion of the Jewish people to Christianity, the Evangelicals have learned to see that the way to the heart of the Jew is through an unconditional promise of friendship. Generally, they now take a cautious stand, sometimes perhaps too cautious. Ajith Fernando, in his concluding remarks on the Book of Acts,¹⁷¹ admonishes that we must never forget Paul’s affirmation of his passion for mission: Salvation was *“first for the Jew, then for the Gentile”*. (Rom. 1:16) And he continues:

«« However, as the founder of “Jews for Jesus”, Moishe Rosen said at the Lausanne II Congress in Manila in 1989 that the Jewish people are among the most gospel-resistant people in the world. The report of that Congress gives reasons for this: *“Folk memories of the horrors of the Middle Ages die hard: to many Jewish people, the name of Christ invokes only the remembrance of state persecution; the cross only the image of the sword, and the very word ‘mission’, only the experience of coercive proselytization.”* Unlike in Paul’s day, the Christian evangelist should go to the Jews with an attitude of repentance for what Christians have done to them in the past. »»

Now, twenty years later the tide has turned. It is the conviction of Jews for Jesus, expressed in the May 2009 issue of their newsletter, that Jewish people in Israel are more open to the gospel message than any other community in the world today! Much has happened since the Manila Congress. Says David Brickner, the Executive Director:

«« The responses we’ve seen to our Behold Your God Israel campaigns have signaled us that now is the time to make an all out effort to make the Saviour known in the Land of Israel. (...) Now more than ever is the time for true Christian Zionists to open their eyes to the phenomenal opportunity to take part in that original vision to [let the Jews] have a restored relationship with God through Jesus. »»

25.119 – The Old Covenant has ‘never’ been Replaced

Jesus is God. That is what we believe. But since his murderers did not know, could not have known, neither they nor their descendants can be blamed for deicide. Indeed even the accusation that the Jews were accessories to the killing of ‘a prophet’ may no longer be made since we now are living in the time according to Jeremiah 31:29: *“They shall say no more: The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on*

171) “The NIV Application Commentary - ACTS” by Ajith Fernando - Zondervan Publ. House, Michigan # 1998 (p. 628).

edge.” After Jeremiah 31:29 it follows that a new covenant will be made, not according to the covenant which they broke when, at the Sinai, they danced before the golden calf: covenant that was renewed at the subsequent Yom Kippur (the rite of Azazel). There will be a renewal of the covenant that, according to verse 33, will be like a law written on everyone’s heart. But in our times this is not knowable, even not among Christians! In the coming days, so says the verse, nobody shall have to confront another with: “*Learn how to know Jahwe*”. The conclusion is that the conditions of the renewed Covenant have already been fulfilled by Jesus’ all-embracing sacrifice on the Cross, but that this still awaits its complete elaboration.

It cannot be said enough: “The Old Covenant was never broken but renewed, it has been expanded.” If there is no breach, then how is the paradox between Jeremiah 31:32 and Hebrews 8:13 to be resolved, declaring the first covenant obsolete? The solution can be found in the special construction of the Sinaitic Covenant. The Sinaitic Code is divided into four parts: the statutes, the judgments, the ordinances and the spiritual leadership. The statutes are the laws pertaining to every phase of human activity in the religious, moral, social, economic, and political spheres. The judgments are the statutes in special cases, the precedents. And then there are the ordinances: they deal with the liturgical aspects, the construction and furnishing of the tabernacle, the vestments and functions of the priest class, the feasts, fasting and the various sacrificial services.

It is difficult to maintain that the Christian dispensation has replaced statutes and judgments, although they are less stringent for the goyim (the Gentiles). The ordinances are a different matter. They found their final destination in Christ’s sacrifice of the Cross. Yet we must keep in mind that throughout this concept the ancient Sinaitic covenant has kept its meaning including the liturgical calendar and its practices. If someone gets a major promotion, in this case Israel, their employment contract may be revised and a whole new package signed while retaining most of the terms of the previous contract.

The meeting places of the first Christians were the synagogues

In the Gospels and epistles, ‘ekklesia’ seems to refer to an assembly of people, while ‘sunagogay’ refers to the place of Sabbath assembly. For example, we know that the believers refer to themselves as the ekklesia, but in 1 Corinthians 11:16, the apostle Paul refers to all the synagogues of Jewery with the same word – which includes believers in Christ as well as typical Jews. The early meeting places of the believers were synagogues; in James 2:2, the text says: “*If a man comes into your assembly (sunagogay)...*” The English translators of the New American Standard chose to translate sunogogay in this instance as ‘assembly’ rather than ‘synagogue’. It seems they did not want to infer that believers were meeting in synagogues. In reality, they were, and true enough, the early believers called their places of assembly ‘synagogues’.

“The Weekly eDrash”, 3/11/2012, by vine of david.org | torahclub.org

The comparison of the Sinaitic covenant with a labor contract should not be extended theologically, because the covenant that God made with Israel is one-sided, as with Noah, David and the tribe of Levi. It is a one-sided promise, although obligations are also stipulated. The covenant with Abraham, the grandfather of Israel, was even unconditional and is therefore called the Dome Covenant, which means that the obligations of the later covenants can never be completely dissolved in the event of non-compliance. A better translation for the Hebrew ‘brith’ is promise, oath, or testament, rather than covenant. One may also speak of a marriage pact, in which the element of mutual faithfulness and God’s care are paramount. Our word covenant has come to us through the

Septuagint (ancient Greek translation), where ‘foedus’ occurs, and through the Vulgate (a later Latin translation), where ‘pactum’ is written. And so we have come to think that the covenants between God and Israel are ordinary contracts between two parties. Zacharias’s hymn says: “...to remember His holy covenant, the oath which He swore to our father Abraham.” (Luke 1:72-73) Here the word oath is synonymous with covenant (brith).

Finally there is the fourth part of the Sinaitic Covenant. This concerns the spiritual leadership which, according to Leviticus 10:10, has to distinguish between the holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean, which still counts fully for Orthodox Judaism. Gentile Christianity has already distanced itself as from its inception from the relevant rules, starting around the discussion point ‘whether or not circumcision’.

25.120 – The SYNAGOGUE, a Continuation of the Church

By way of conclusion we can state that the Old Sinaitic Covenant has never been revoked. But it is close to obsolescence in awaiting the apotheosis in the coming Reign of Peace, when the laws will have been written in everyone’s heart and no one has to tell anyone else: get to know God! (Hebr. 8:10-11, Jer. 31:33-34) It is my firm conviction that God’s plan for the world lies hidden in the covenants with Israel, not the covenant with Abraham alone but also the one, as now appears, made on Mount Sinai. Today’s Jewry is not a relic from a dark age that as far as theology is concerned has had its day. The Jews are to be the leader-people under the salvatory destiny that the world is rushing to, according to the word: (Is. 49:6, 46:13, 49:23)

«« It is too small a thing that you should be My servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved ones of Israel: I will also give you as a light to the Gentiles, that you should be My salvation to the ends of the earth. (...) I will place salvation in Zion, for Israel My glory (...) Kings shall bow down to you with their faces to the earth, and lick up the dust of your feet. »»

But some will say: just look at how Israel is misbehaving; it is ridiculous to quote these texts. To which my response: “Listen to this Word”:

«« I knew that Israel would deal very treacherously. You are called a transgressor from the womb. I have tested you in the furnace of affliction. For My own sake, for My own sake, I will do it, for how should My Name be profaned? And I will not give My glory to another. »» (Is. 48:8-11)

We should not infer that then the Christian Church will have done away and that then Judaism will replace it in what proves to be a reverse rehearsal of when the Jewish people was dismissed in favour of the elected from the Gentiles. That is not going to happen. It is not without reason that Christ foretold after his solemn self-revelation on Tabor that “*the gates of Hell shall not prevail against the Church*”. (Mt. 16:15-18) This prophecy cannot be separated from the fact that the Church and Christ are one. That is what this self-revelation is about. Jesus says in The Book of Truth (March 8, 2013): “*My Body is My Church. (...) Only those who speak the Truth and adhere to the Holy Word of God can be part of My Church on earth.*” The institution, the visible body, is therefore secondary, though it has shown its importance throughout history. Instead of having replaced it, a new relationship will arise with Judaism whereby, in the fulfillment of the Old Testament promises, the Jews will be *primus inter pares* in the new organic context. How exactly that will take shape is not clear to me. Is not required. All in due time.

APPENDIX 16

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC VIEW ON THE POSITION OF THE CHURCH

This article was inspired by Dr. Gregg R. Allison's article, "Roman Catholic Theology and Practice", published in Dec. 2014 and derived from his book "Roman Catholic Theology and Practice: An Evangelical Assessment", released the same year. From an evangelical point of view he tried to show that Roman Catholic theology is on the wrong track. However, his 'evidence' turned out to prove just the opposite. Many amendments have been made and the frequent quotes are not indicated.

There are two major themes on this playing field: the nature-grace interdependence, and the Christ-Church interconnection.

- The first one departs from the idea that nature and grace are designed by God to function in reliance upon one another. Indeed, nature is to be a channel of grace, and grace exists to perfect our fallen human nature that once was redeemed and saved, but nonetheless our nature needs to be redeemed uninterruptedly for as long as it has not reached its ultimate perfection and remains liable to sin. It will not be until the after-life that that burden is going to be shaken off.

For instance, water (in the realm of nature) is capable of receiving and becoming a vehicle of grace that can be used for the sacrament of baptism (any water can do; it does not need to be consecrated), which confers to its recipient a certain nature (that of Christ - Col. 2:12), who then becomes more receptive to grace and less to the curses of the evil one. The same is true for the Sacrament of Holy Unction or Chrism (in the realm of nature) that through grace conveys a particular nature to someone being anointed – in such a way that his new nature makes him a person that is receptive to certain types of grace.

In the same way bread and wine (in the realm of nature) are capable of being trans-substantiated: that is to say that these are reincarnated by the embodiment of Christ, thus nourishing the faithful through grace if they consume this embodiment of Jesus Christ (body and blood) and also desire to be nourished that way (an act of faith is required to receive its beneficial effects, for it is no magical formula). This sounds strange, but we should realize that the universe in its totality is a reincarnation of Christ (Col. 1:15-17), and so was the body of Christ when conceived in the Virgin Mary. In comparable fashion the consecrated bread or Holy Host is a reincarnation of Christ: the limited can contain the infinite just as there is always the possibility of an infinite number of numbers between any two numbers.

The theme of the nature-grace interdependence helps to understand why the sacraments of the Holy Catholic Church are the most effective way for our salvation. Grace is always communicated to the 'flesh' through concrete means of nature, and this even holds for those beneficiaries who remain outside the Roman Catholic institute. At the other end of the spectrum there is the reprehensible super-spiritualization that is lurking through the practices of the New Age movement.

- The second theme comprehends the Christ-Church interconnection. Grace meets nature, and it is through the nature of the ecclesiastical institute on earth – represented by its servants, who care for the flock and intercede with God – that in a special way the life-giving grace flows on (there is also a general way, because God's grace is like water that invades each chink). This operation is nothing other than an extension or fanning out of Jesus' incarnation, though the Church has always remained an imperfect replica of Jesus, if only because priests are human too, except for the fact that a true pope has always been free from error in matters of moral and doctrine, if officially proclaimed. Yet, although the outward appearance of the Church through human frailty is imperfect, the spiritual core always remains perfect, which is comparable to the outward appearance of Christ during his suffering on the Cross whilst his divine core remained untouched. It is Christ who in his infinity makes himself small to penetrate into each and every one of the faithful, who together are the Church, that is Christ, who through its natural and spiritual reality finds the way to penetrate into God's greatness.

There is of course also the church of the communion of saints, which includes both the earthly realm and the departed souls in blissful perfection, but also those suffering in Purgatory. We should not forget the saints on earth who are found within the Protestant denominations, but are separated from the Catholic Church; instead of being nourished by the Holy Host they are nourished by the Word of God. All these categories constitute the one Church; in the Reign of Peace they will have been fused together into the one Triumphant Church.

Two thousand years ago, the incarnate God-man, Jesus Christ, mediated grace to nature, his perfect nature, as He came to save sinful human beings. As a prolongation of the incarnation of Christ, the Church mediates grace to our nature, that of us. Indeed, in the ideal condition the Church acts as another Christ-person, standing in between the world (the realm of nature) and God (the realm of grace).

The key principle of the Christ-Church interconnection helps to understand why the Catholic Church is an institution wanted by God that came into being as 'a' means for the dispensation of graces, acting as an intercessory partner. Both are meant for the salvation and betterment of each individual as well as for the salvation of communities and their political systems, until finally the whole world is being saved according to the promise of the Millennium Age. This explains why the Roman Church is the preferred way to guide the faithful on the path to perfection and final salvation.

*** Chrism – from Greek 'chrisma' for anointing:**

The Chrism is made from olive oil mixed with perfume. It is blessed by the bishop every year at the Chrism Mass, usually on Holy Thursday. Chrism is used in the postbaptismal anointing, confirmation, ordinations and dedications. The strengthening effect and fragrance of the oil reflect the presence of the Holy Spirit. According to legend, it was Christ himself who, on the day of the Last Supper, taught his disciples how to prepare the ointment.

• Examples of the Nature-Grace interdependence and the Christ-Church interconnection

Doctrine of salvation and perfection

Catholic theology views the process by which God rescues fallen human beings as being synergistic, that is, a cooperative venture between divine grace and human effort, to work in someone so that he can be a blessing to the world and attain the best conditions for his eternal life. It considers the operation of salvation to be an infusion of divine grace by which one's very nature progressively improves towards the ideal that in this dispensation will remain a lofty dream. This point dovetails with Catholic theology's understanding the goal of salvation in terms of deification, that is the process by which human nature through grace becomes ever more in the likeness of Christ. If interrupted through engaging in venial or even mortal sin, it can be renewed through the Sacrament of Penance by which the state of grace returns and grace is increasingly conveyed for the perfection of human nature. If this process remains too much on the surface, because in fact the person has not earnestly devoted himself – that is, if grace has not been allowed to elevate his human nature to true communion with God – a sojourn in Purgatory finishes the purification. However, even if the deceased has been purified and no need exists to go through Purgatory, there will be an elevation to higher grades of perfection. Actually, the elevation to ever higher grades of perfection in the hereafter, is a process that can go on for very long, but that is not our topic.

Catholic Priesthood

Grace is concretely communicated to nature, and the highest tangible expression of grace, after the Lord himself, is the communion of priests within the Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Churches. This aspect is especially seen in the forgiveness of sins (John 20:23) and the Holy Mass. Indeed, by the sacrament of Holy Orders, humans (the realm of nature) are consecrated so as to be able to administer the sacraments (the realm of grace). Because of the communion of priests, it is Christ himself who through those Churches transsubstantiates, teaches, ordains, wards off demonic powers (very important), etc., though it must be said that God's grace extends to all people on earth, but not as powerful and comprehensive as within and by the Roman Catholic Church and Eastern Orthodox Churches. The priesthood can be considered an extension of the incarnation, and so a priest acts in Persona Christi, the head, when he engages as a member of that body.

The Teachings of the Most Holy Virgin Mary

The most Holy Virgin Mary, and the doctrines associated with her, illustrate the nature-grace interdependence. Mary, as a fully human being, is in the realm of nature. However, due to her immaculate conception, her human nature was not fallen and, through her cooperation with grace, it remained untouched throughout her life. Accordingly, in Mary's nature, grace finds complete openness and full capacity for cooperation that facilitated the incarnation of the Son of God and gave her meritorious suffering at the foot of the Cross. And because she never once sinned, attested to by her perpetual virginity, at the end of her days her body and soul were assumed (taken up) into heaven. Additionally, the Church acknowledges her particular mediatorial role in the distribution of graces, reason why Maria received the title Mediatrix, derived from her Son, the Mediator par excellence.



• The Role of the Traditional Church

The One true Church

Because the Roman Catholic Church and Orthodox Churches represent through its servants and faithful a prolongation of the incarnation of Jesus, it understands itself as the One true Church, meaning that Protestant denominations are seen as gatherings, not as actual churches. For the Catholic system, the universal church is equated with the visible Roman Church. This understanding, however, disregards that the only true Church is Christ Himself and that sheep outside the Catholic flock, in whom Christ lives and who live in Him, belong to the Church too. Remains that the institute on earth, known as the Roman Catholic Church, is both a mother and a teacher. As the supreme mediator of grace in the realm of nature, the institute is called to be a most useful expedient on our path to become in the likeness of Christ. Woe to the world if she does not attend to her task!

A final remark is in order here. The institute is meant for the multitudes for whom texts like Hebrews 4:16 and 10:19 remain out of reach: *“Let us come boldly to the throne of grace (...) and enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus.”* Of course, as Romans 5:1 teaches, we are justified by faith, but the question arises whether our faith is firmly footed, a question also dealt with by Saint Therese of Lisieux when a fellow-sister asked her about Purgatory. She answered that if one believes in God’s mercy and redemption, the Purgatory can be skipped. In final resort, we get what we want.

Discussions by Saint Therese on Purgatory

To one of her fellow-sisters in the convent, Maria Philomena, who believed in the near impossibility of going to Heaven without passing through Purgatory, Saint Therese of Lisieux commented, when still a novice: *“You do not have enough trust. You have too much fear before the good God. I can assure you that He is grieved over this. You should not fear Purgatory because of the suffering there, but should instead ask that you not deserve to go there in order to please God, who so reluctantly imposes this punishment. As soon as you try to please Him in everything and have an unshakable trust He purifies you every moment in his love and He lets no sin remain. And then you can be sure that you will not have to go to Purgatory.”* In a discussion with another fellow sister, Marie Febronia, who was 67 years old and the sub-prioress, she explained that God is for her more like a father than a judge: *“My sister if you look for the justice of God you will get it. The soul will receive from God exactly what she desires.”* The year had not passed when Marie Febronia together with other sisters fell prey to the flu and died. Three months later Therese had a dream which she related to her Mother Prioress: *“O my mother, Sister Marie Febronia came to me last night and asked that we should pray for her. She is in Purgatory because surely she had trusted too little in the mercy of the good Lord. Through her imploring behaviour and her profound looks it seemed she wanted to say: ‘You were right. I am now delivered up to the full justice of God but it is my own fault. If I had listened to you I would not be here now.’”*

• To Separate the Sheep from the Goats

As concerns redemption it seems that God follows a two-way track as evidenced by Mark 4:34: *"He did not say anything to them without using a parable. But when he was alone with his own disciples, he explained everything."* John Gills commentary is as follows: *"The multitude being dismissed, He unfolded and explained all these parables to his disciples, and led them into a large knowledge of Himself, and the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, whereby they were furnished for the work He had called them to, and designed them for."* What does that mean? The Lord knew that the multitudes, in their present condition, could never be one with Him, although He could have wished differently. He knew that, in practice, He could never dwell in all of them as in a true Temple of God. (2 Cor. 6:16)

The religious deadness in the Roman Catholic Church, as well as all the other churches, is frightening. In general, the faithful are guided through a performance-oriented form of religion that deals with outward appearances but leaves the essential condition of the heart untouched. Sadly, the pharisees of old are still very much present. The breed is not dead, but is alive and flourishing. Like a deadly virus it has infected virtually every church denomination (among which also the Roman Catholic Church), although in most Christian groups are also holy men, but they are the exception rather than the rule. At its core we find a 'system of religion' that deals with externals and leaves untouched the hearts that are in dire need of the life in Christ. The glad tidings of the early Church have been digested; the nutritious elements have been extracted, and what remains is feces, which cannot serve for the preservation of the body of Christ. The message of Maria Divine Mercy of Febr. 11th 2015, given to her by Jesus, is clear: *"If you were to witness the dull grey and darkened souls of those with lukewarm hearts it would cause you to weep. Sadly, the majority of souls are in darkness and were you to see this you would die of shock, such is the state of the souls of humanity."*

And again Maria Divine Mercy says in her message of Jesus of Oct. 12th 2013:

«« How I weep with bitter sorrow for the souls of the arrogant, the ignorant and those with hardened hearts. They are so stuffed with pride, that they will never see Me because they can't. It is not possible for a person to see Me or to be filled with my True Word, if they are stricken with the sin of pride. Those of you, on the other hand, who know Me, but who accept Me on your own terms – you too distance yourselves from Me. Why do you say you know Me and then twist what I told you about following Me? How can you call yourself a Christian and be prepared to accept false theology and lies, which you have twisted to suit your own lifestyles? Who are you if you do not follow Me and accept the full Truth of my Teachings? You are a traitor. You betray Me. When you betray Me once, you will be tempted to do it again and again, until finally, you will no longer be a Christian in my eyes. »»

The Royal Priesthood of God, spoken of in 1 Peter 2, where the Holy Spirit is the real power, the real teacher, the real deliverer, the real dispenser of truth, etc., is not to be found in the normal way of doing of the institutional churches. The true companionship with God is only for a very few, at least in our present world. Man-inspired religions continue to produce a vast majority of 'whited sepulchres'. God's message from the Book of Revelation, chapter 3, to the churches of Sardis and Laodicea, is aimed at all systems of religion that produce fruits that qualify as external devotion without the empowerment of the heart. It says: *"I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead."* To the Laodicean church the judgment reads that they are *"wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked."* In both cases, the shepherds and their sheep

are asked to repent and seek God's way of salvation and 'his' righteousness, not 'theirs'. Religion, as practiced today, teaches Christ in theory, but not one of daily fellowship with Him. Shepherds may know the theory of the Spirited life but are most often incapable to apply it to themselves, much less teach it to others. Jesus said that they are blind guides: *"If a blind man leads a blind, both will fall into a pit."* (Mt. 15:14)



Cheerful rashness, but inside they are as dry as grass.

Allain de la Motte writes in his article "Jesus v/s Religion", from 2005:

«« Let's face it, 'religion' has become a multi-billion dollar system where thousands of full-time workers earn a good living from it. As a result, it is more important to produce happy and contented financial backers than to fulfill the less popular need to faithfully and diligently teach the Truth of Scripture in its entirety. Religion is thus neatly packaged and promoted to make the sheep feel an artificial sense of security and wellbeing. In so doing, modern day pharisees make a farce of the Message of the Cross.

Neat rules are established and passed down from generation to generation. Boundaries are carefully laid out to give the 'sheep' an artificial sense of security within the confines of religion. In many instances, programs are designed to produce a positive change in behavior while they neglect the fact that the heart of Man *"is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, who can know it"* (Jer. 17:9), let alone produce [an in depth] positive change through self-will or self-effort. As a result, sincere church-going members have a total misconception of the mercy and grace of a loving God and the Christian life in general. Slowly they become bound in legalism and [worn out] tradition, and as a result are precluded from experiencing the wonderfully soothing presence of the indwelling Holy Spirit and the peaceful joy which results from being one with the Father, and Jesus Christ his Son.

Though many churches boast of huge memberships, wonderful programs, and a clergy with doctorate degrees in theology, they are dead because the Holy Spirit is not given the place owed to Him in their hearts and in their assembly. As a result, God's words spoken through the prophet Isaiah pronounce the same judgment on them: *"These people come near Me with their mouth and honor Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from Me. Their worship of Me is made up only of rules taught by men."* (Is. 29:13) »»

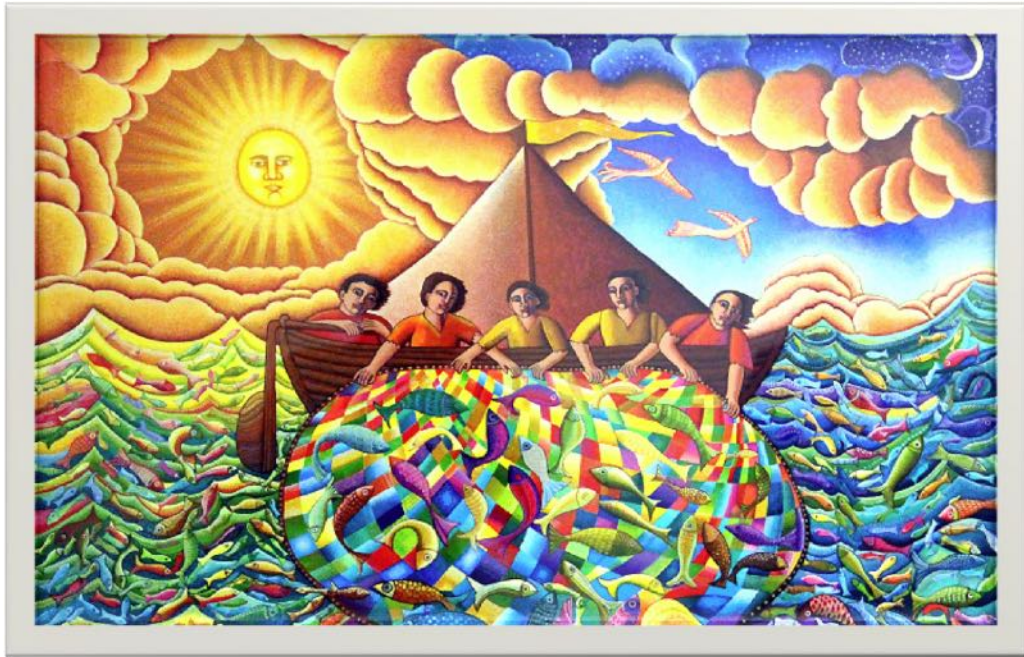
Does this mean that all people who practice an outward religion are lost? Of course not. Yet, taken their lack of insight and poor perception of the economics of grace, their

decision to belong to Jesus will often be postponed to the threshold of life and death. Then, only then, the soul will decide to whom she belongs more, for whom the balance tilts, in favour of God or of Satan. An extremely dangerous game because the Hell is overcrowded, not so Heaven and Purgatory (MDM Oct. 20th 2012). This gives the *raison d'être* of Purgatory. However, in the Reign of Peace no such duplicity exists – and Purgatory will have ceased to exist (MDM Oct. 7th 2011 and Oct. 12th 2013). Therefore, it is at the approach of this reign, through harrowing circumstances, so that everything seems to fall apart, that each individual will be forced to make a choice, whether to repent, already now and here and not on the threshold of earthly life.

A religion of formalities is very attractive. To take one's own responsibility and risk the disapproval of others, to sacrifice one's Isaac, so to say, to sacrifice the spiritual laziness, is not self-evident. It needs some shaking to force people to choose: to be for, or against God. This is a prophetic insight from a Protestant lady: *"A maturing process of evil has been necessary for the introduction of censorship, and to protect the good even to the very end. God's intervention has led to the pouring out of the spirit of Jesus, who will destroy the power of the beast."* This censorship is the same as spoken off in Matthew 25:31-46 where Jesus, at the great harvest, judges the nations and the individuals thereof. He then separates the sheep from the goats. The sheep will inherit the kingdom or Reign of Peace, but the goats will be cast into Hell. To know who may enter the new reign, judgment should be clearcut. The unmasking is essential, for no uncleannes may exist in the Reign of Peace. Because of this polarization at the end, or new beginning, evil men wax worse at the approach of the Reign. (2 Tim. 3:13) The middle segment will have disappeared altogether, which means that the traditional churches will then have lost their function as gate-keeper to ward off the wolves; their traditional role of keeping the flock inside and put into a mold of decency will have disappeared. Instead most of the churches will have been thrown into disarray and they will have become wolf's dens, and unfortunately this also applies to the Roman Catholic Church. Hard to swallow, but that is what we are seeing now, and this has been foretold with the parable of the sheep-fold. (John 10:11-16)



‘The Great Catch’



END TIME AS A TIME OF OUTPOURING OF THE SPIRIT REPENTANCE THROUGH TESTIMONY AND PRAYER

The narration according to John 21: Shortly after his resurrection, Jesus came to his disciples at Lake Tiberias, where some of them were fishing. They hadn't caught anything all night. Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the bank even though they did not recognize Him. He called out: 'Do you have anything to eat?' 'No', they replied. 'Throw out the net on starboard side', Jesus said with a loud voice, 'then it will work.' They cast the net and there was so much fish in it that they couldn't get it up. John cried out to Peter: 'It is the Lord!' As soon as he heard that, he put off his outer garment – that's all he had on – and jumped into the water. The others arrived by boat and towed the full net behind them. When they came ashore they saw a fire with fish on it and bread. Jesus said: 'Bring some of the fish you have caught.' The net was full of large fish, 153 of them all, and yet it did not tear. Jesus said: 'Come, eat some.' No one dared ask who He was; they understood it was the Lord. Jesus took bread and gave from it, and also from the fish. This was the third time since his resurrection from the dead that Jesus appeared to his disciples.

26.121 – The Jews remain the Leader People

Here is another typical example of a story, which also functions as a parable. Take the Greek for fish. That is ichthus (ἰχθύς), whose pictura (image) was supposed to indicate in early Christianity: 'Christians live here'. It is also an acronym, each letter of which is the first letter of a word: Ἰησοῦς Χριστός Θεοῦ Υἱός Σωτήρ (Jesus Christ God's Son Saviour). Jewish tradition recognizes the fish as a symbol of the human soul. For instance, a well-known saying goes that the souls of the Jewish people swim like fish in the waters of the Torah (first 5 books of the Bible). We may confidently state that the great catch of fish from the Gospel of John is related to the proclamation of the Gospel. Yes, the object of the salvation of souls has old papers.

At first glance, the explanation of the great catch seems simple. Jesus' followers were to become fishers of men, although they still saw it as a purely Jewish affair. There was only one place where sacrifices could be made and that was Jerusalem. This fact strengthened their belief that salvation was for the Jews only. The real reason why sacrifices were only permitted in one place was different; it was because otherwise the Israelites could too easily adopt pagan practices for the sacrifices made abroad, where they also went. Another factor was that they had not forgotten the instruction when they went out to preach during Jesus' public appearance, not to go to the Gentiles but only to "*the lost sheep of the House of Israel*." (Mt. 10:5-6) It was not until some time later, after the sensational vision of Peter, that the realization began to dawn that the Gospel was equally destined for the 'unclean'. (Acts 10) Finally it would appear that salvation was destined for the nations, as witnessed by Ephesians 1:4-14, to which these were predestined from before the foundation of the world. Through Christ Jesus they could be adopted as children and in that sense become joint heirs according to the good pleasure of God's will. His children, the Gentiles/Goyim had always been, but as bastards, not as children who had a share in God's inheritance with a place and function in Christ's kingdom, which is also the kingdom of God, the seventh-day kingdom or Millennial Reign.¹⁷²⁾ Now, however, there was a new expression of will and what once seemed beyond reach had come close; despite being bastards, they were treated kindly and mercifully and could also receive a share in their Father's inheritance.

As bastards, they are not allowed to rise above the legal children, as Ishmael, when he tried to outdo Jacob, but on the other hand, the legal children must not reject the bastards, for doing so goes against the sovereign decision of the Father, who out of his infinite treasures has enough for everyone. In this context Romans 4:18 is of importance: "*Abraham, contrary to hope, continued to believe that he would become the father of many nations, according to what was spoken to him [by God]: 'So shall your seed be'.*"

To what extent is it possible, in accordance with the foregoing, to call Christendom 'Abraham's Seed' without setting Israel aside? According to some, this verse would show that since Christ's coming biological parentage no longer matters – only faith would matter. However, Romans 9:4-5 reads: "*Yet they are Israelites to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the Law, the service of God, and the promises; of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen!*" According to the Abrahamic Dome Covenant, we all are children of Abraham, but the Sinaitic Covenant with the people of Israel came afterwards, with its statutes, judgments, spiritual leadership and ordinances! For that reason, an Israelite belongs to the leader-nation par excellence, whose sleeve, in the coming reign, each man wants to grasp. (Zech. 8:23) The letter to the Galatians also helps to resolve this dilemma (ch. 3, in its typically Jewish way, is worth reading):

«« For you are 'all' [either Israelite or from any other nation] sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. As many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ [as a member of his body - cf. Rom. 12:5 et al.]. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female – you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are [in Him] Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. »» (Gal. 3:26-29)

172) The Augsburg Confession of 1530 (art. 17), as well as the 2nd Swiss Confession of 1566 (art. 11), as well as the 1561 Dutch Confession of Faith (art. 37), the Heidelberg Catechism of 1563 (Q. 52 and 123), and finally the 2nd Swiss Confession of 1566 (art. 11), do not want to know about a real Millennial Reign of Peace, perhaps as a reaction to Luther's view that the end times had already arrived and that therefore the papacy was the Antichrist. See Heiko A. Oberman's book "Luther: Man between God and the Devil" # 1981, as well as Dennis Pettibone: "Martin Luther and the AntiChrist" in Perspective Digest (Vol. 13-Iss. 2, art. 1) # 2008.

26.122 – A New Awakening, and Evangelical Thrust

During the outpouring of the Holy Spirit during the First Pentecost in Jerusalem, the Apostle Peter stood up and loudly proclaimed what the Prophet Joel had foretold, that this outpouring was the prelude to the coming Reign of Peace. (Acts 2) Nevertheless, Peter's emphasis was still on the preaching to the Jews and their incorporation through baptism, whether at home or in the dispersion. Now we understand, only now can we understand, that the scope of this prophecy goes much, much further. In fact, the Book of Acts is about the calling of the Jewish people and their rejection of this calling. It is in Paul's late epistles that the place of the Gentile church is put in a greater light. They were written after the withered branches of Judaism were (temporarily) broken away by God. (Rom. 11) Ephesians 3:5-6 reads: *"In other ages it was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit (...) that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs in the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ."* This would multiply into *"the great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues."* (Rev. 7:9)

Shortly after Pentecost, a reorientation takes place in Peter's thinking as a result of his vision of the unclean animals. What follows are excerpts from Acts 10, where this is discussed:

«« Peter saw heaven opened and an object like a great sheet bound at the four corners, descending to him and let down to the earth. In it were all kinds of four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air. And a voice came to him: *"Rise, Peter; kill and eat."* But Peter said: *"Not so, Lord! For I have never eaten anything common or unclean."* And a voice spoke to him again the second time: *"What God has cleansed you must not call common."* »»

Immediately after this vision, he was called to go to the Centurion Cornelius, where he saw all his family and closest friends gathered. Petrus spoke to them: *"You know that it is forbidden for a Jew to associate with or visit a Gentile in his home. But God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean."* And he continued:

«« In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality. But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him. (...) While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. And those of the circumcision [the Judeo-Christians], who believed, were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles as well; for they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then Peter continued: *"Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?"* And he commanded them to be baptized in the Name of Jesus Christ. »»

We now return to the story of the miraculous catch. There was already fish on the fire. The fish already on the fire, which is the fire of the Holy Spirit, represents the great crowd 'who could number no one' out of all countries and peoples, of every tribe and language. That is different from the large catch of fish, at an earlier time, because this one could be counted, a total of 153 big fish. It is also said that *"they hadn't caught anything all night."* That does not apply to that other catch. The night in which nothing was caught does not indicate the preaching to the Jewry prior to Paul's capture by the Roman governor. That this preaching bore fruit is evident from the account Paul gave in Jerusalem, just before his capture, in which *"he described in detail what God through his work of preaching [in the region of] the Gentiles had established. When they heard that, they praised and honored God: 'You see, brother, how many myriads of Jews there are who have believed, and how zealous they are for the law.'"* (Acts 21:19-20)¹⁷³ It follows that the significance of the great catch of fish is not self-evident. I believe it applies to the period immediately preceding the Kingdom of Peace, bearing in mind the

Our Father prayer in which, according to Matthew 26:29, the ‘Thy Kingdom come’ is in sight but still awaiting its fulfillment.¹⁷⁴⁾

However, before the Kingdom of God begins “*there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.*” (Mt. 24:21) But that time is not just tribulation. It is also the time of awakening, and of an Evangelical thrust, massively and worldwide. As things stand now, very few people would be admitted to the Reign of Peace. And would there not also be salvation for the multitudes of Judaism for whom God has reserved such glorious promises? And then, after first having been fished, they themselves will become fishers of men, which has always been the litmus test of true conversion. After the futile preaching to the Jewish people “*in the [long] night in which nothing was caught*”, “*in the early morning*” of the Reign of Peace there will be the time of ‘the new Evangelization’, which I do not believe will be driven by some ecclesiastical authority, but directly by the Holy Spirit. Besides, without the action of the Holy Spirit, there is no one who can be convinced of sin, righteousness, and judgment. (John 16:8)



Little could be expected from casting the dragnet over the other tack. Logically, the dragnet must be casted on the bank; they were a hundred yards from shore. In the relatively shallow it is easier to catch something. The other side must have been the deep side. The favorable fishing hour had passed, and yet, the net immediately fills up. With 153 fish it was a good but not an exceptional catch, which would normally have weighed between forty and sixty kilos, but they were whoppers weighing in at perhaps 7 kilos, together well over a thousand kilograms, and nevertheless the net broke not. The report does not mention a large quantity of fish indicating that a large weight of fish is meant. It was so heavy that it was impossible to just lift it on board.

For an incomprehensible reason the big fish had fled from the deep to the boats. Let us look at what that means. We may say that the Evangelization was set in motion by Jesus;

173) See also Acts 2:41, 5:14, 6: 7, 9:31, 14:1 and 17:12. The number of individuals who adopted the faith in Paul's preaching work in Asia Minor was great, but Judaism as an institution continued to oppose the message of 'the man of Nazareth', which explains the breaking away of the withered branches, image of Judaism then, as outlined in Romans 11:13-24. The noble trunk, image of ancient Israel, on which those branches stood, however, was retained to serve as a new grafting root for Judaism later, when standing at the gates of the Reign of Peace.

174) The general view that the kingdom dwells in us and should grow there, is valuable, but gives no argument to exclude a real reign on earth, the Reign of Peace.

until the week of his Crucifixion, that was his greatest commission according to the word of the Prophet Isaiah: *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor."* (Luke 4:18) This was followed by two thousand years of Evangelism by his followers who are 'one in Christ' and would do greater works – of making people turn to the Lord – than He did. (John 14:12) Finally, in the end time, 'the third' and most successful campaign will start in which all Israel, along with the Gentiles, will find salvation in Christ Jesus. For it says: *"This was already the third time that Jesus himself appeared to the disciples."* John the Baptist does not count in this, because it says: *"Jesus himself appeared"*. Paul says: *"Blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles will have come in. And thereafter all Israel will be saved."* (Rom. 11:25-26) This blindness also fits with the observation that the fishing disciples did not recognize Jesus in the form as He came to them: in the form as the Christian churches have presented Him, the Jews do not recognize their Messiah.

After this piece was published, a reader pointed out the following, which escaped my attention. He wrote:

«« There is also something very peculiar about the fish that are pulled ashore by the fishermen. While the fish were still in the sea, they are described by 'ichthus', the word normally used for fish. However, the freshly caught fish that they have to give to their Master, who is sitting on the beach, is referred to by a completely different word, namely 'opsarion'. The Lord says: *"Get some of the opsarion you just caught."* »» In fishing lingo that means 'smoked fish'! Smoked fish, fresh from the water?! ¹⁷⁵⁾

What is the significance of that? Being smoked is a sign of being stained by sin. The big fish were evildoers. At Zechariah 3:1-4, the High Priest Joshua, after being indicted by Satan, is compared to a brand snatched from the fire. Despite being stained by grave sin – the brand had burned black – he is exalted by God. David says in Psalm 119:83 that he feels like a leather bag (no-ad) in the smoke, black and sooty, shriveled by the heat, a striking image of despair at his own fault. Psalm 119 – as quoted by Charles Spurgeon – is referred to by John Palanterior as the alphabet of divine Love, the paradise of all doctrines, the storehouse of the Holy Spirit, the school of truth, as well as the profound mystery of Scripture in which all moral discipline of all virtues shines brightly. So there is hope! The Hebrew for brand reverts to 'ad'. Ad is vapour, but vapour with a destructive effect; it is actually a cloud of smoke. Obviously this should not be taken as a weather condition. Smoke from the destroyer relates to fire like in Acts 2:17-19 where the Greek *atmis* is used: *"And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, (...) that I will work miracles in the sky above and wonders on the earth below. There will be blood and fire and 'clouds of smoke'."* *Atmis* appears only one other time in the New Testament, in James 4:14: *"For what is the life of a human? A cloud of smoke that appears for a little while and then vanishes away."* Indeed, not very complimentary and therefore the translation is usually toned down with a term like vapour. Wrongfully. Look at Isaiah 65:3-5: *"A people that provoketh Me (...) and remain among the graves (...) they are a smoke in my nose."* Fire and heat accord in the rites with demonic pre-

175) Of the three large fish species in the Sea of Tiberias (Galilee), the wolffish is unclean because unscaled. (Lev. 11:9-12) According to the interpretation of the Great Catch, only the rescued are in the fishing net, not wolffish. Matthew 13:47-50 does mention unclean fish, the bad ones: «« The kingdom of heaven is like what happens when a dragnet is thrown into a lake and catches all kinds of fish. When the net is full, it is dragged to the shore, and the fishermen sit down to separate the fish. They keep the good ones, but throw the bad ones (without scales) away. That's how it will be at the end of time. Angels will come and separate the evil people from the ones who have done right. Then those evil people will be thrown into a flaming furnace, where they will cry and grit their teeth in pain. »»

sence. The Jews make their food wholesome (kosher) according to the prescriptions of Biblical law that speak of cooking utensils that can stand the fire, following the principle that heating conquers all forms of demonism. The foregoing indicates that the whoppers caught were also the greatest of sinners, subject to demonic presence. This fits the message of J.N.S.R.:

«« Those big fishes, most of them abusers of humankind, fear the coming judgment, and see from afar, the penetrating look of the great Master. And so, they dare not approach. The Master begins to raise his arm to bring the trumpet to his lips, which are still praying to the Father to forgive them. And before the sound resonates through the air, the heads of the big fishes come up between the last waves. Then, the very last wave drags with it all the late-comers, all those who, on this shore, the persons, good and sensitive, were not able to reach [with the message of salvation], except GOD who waits tirelessly, He, the Merciful Lord who forgives, even on his CROSS, the thieves, the Good one as well as the Wicked! ¹⁷⁶⁾ »»

26.123 – *May God break open their Hearts*

The Book of Revelation 14:6-7 :

«« Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, **having the everlasting Gospel** to preach to those who dwell on the earth – to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people. Saying with a loud voice: *“Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of his judgment has come, and worship Him who made the firmament and the earth, the sea and springs of water [and who directs the elements of nature].”* »»

Just before the gates of the Reign of Peace creak open, there is the great and terrible day of judgment. The Greek here for judgment is ‘crisis’. Yes, then the world is in crisis. Not a happy spectacle. And yet, a judgment in which the earth groans under the violence of the elements of nature, serves to make a clean slate, for it says: *“to convince of judgment (...) because the ruler of this world [Lucifer] is judged”* (John 16:8-11) A crisis situation is often the only way to bring people to the realization of their own sinfulness so that they can beg for forgiveness, too often just before death, which, then, will be granted. After the son of Sarepta’s widow died, she told the Prophet: *“Have you come to bring my sin to remembrance, and to kill my son?”* (1 Kings 17:18) An insightful remark. Mary Divine Mercy says in her message (Book of Truth, June 12, 2013):

«« The time is almost upon humanity for the Truth to be witnessed. Not many, including those who profess allegiance to Me, will respond to my Call, until my Father casts down many punishments. So blind are you to the Truth of Eternal Life, so immune are you to hearing the Word of God, that the only way you will listen is when chastisements are brought down upon you. When the first of many befall you, many will say that they are natural catastrophes, but when they rain down upon you so quickly, and when you have nowhere to run, only then will you know that it is the Hand of God, which befalls you. »»

Man deceives others, but primarily himself. Man’s greatest lie in our world is that she thinks to be without sin. Sadly, without a sense of sin, repentance and salvation can never take place, seeking comfort from our Lord and Saviour. A sense of sin is what brings about God’s judgment. And thus one can say that in God’s plan his judgments are constructive, not destructive. Also at his second coming, Jesus does not come to

¹⁷⁶⁾ From the Biblical account and in general from the mystical literature it does not appear that the wicked one was saved too. Therefore, this is a new observation.

condemn, but to save. The Gospel contains the famous comment from Jesus' conversation with one of the elders of Israel:

«« God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. He who believes in Him is not condemned, but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the Name of the only begotten Son of God. »» (John 3:16-18)

I am preparing a Holy Army of Evangelists

Behold, I am preparing a holy army. They will do mighty exploits for Me and destroy your high places. They are an army of holy men and women, boys and girls. They have been anointed to preach the true Gospel, to lay hands on the sick and to call the sinner to repentance.

This is an army of working men, housewives, single men, single women and school children. They are common people, for not many noble have responded to my call. In the past they have been misunderstood and mistreated, abused and rejected. But I have blessed them with boldness in holiness and in spirit. They will begin to fulfill my prophecy, and to do my will. I will walk in them, talk in them and work in them.

These are they who have turned to Me with all their heart, soul, mind and strength. This army will awaken many to righteousness and purity of spirit. I will soon begin to move upon them, to choose for my army those I desire. I will search for them in the cities and in the towns. Many will be surprised at those I have chosen. You will see them begin to move across the land and do exploits for my Name's sake.

“Visions of Hell” by Mary K. Baxter (ch. The Left Arm of Hell)

And therefore, as mentioned already, when the angel announces God's judgment, he carries the Gospel with him. Gospel means 'good tidings'. Seems paradoxical. How can tidings be good when catastrophes hit the world? Yes, nonetheless, it follows a well-defined plan that affects human psychology. Judgments enable God to elevate his creation, but this never happens without giving man a chance to evade judgment. But who is listening? Watchman Nee, a great Chinese preacher of the 20th century,¹⁷⁷ wrote in “The Spirit of Judgment”: *“He who will be the most surprised is each person's own self, for no one truly knows himself. Judgment will cause us to know our true character. Whatever has been hidden from us will be exposed on that day. Hence judgment is a great revelation, not only revealing God but also revealing what kind of person we are.”* (ch. 1) Watchman Nee refers here to the first letter to the Corinthians:

«« But how you or a human institution judge me I don't mind. In fact, I do not even judge myself. I know of no wrong by myself, yet am not justified by this; but He who judges me is the Lord. So stop judging and wait for the time of the coming of the Lord, who will both bring to light the things hidden in darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. And then it will be God who lets each one give the praise that is due to Him. »» (4:3-5)

¹⁷⁷ Watchman Nee (1903-1972) was a Chinese preacher who spent 20 years in prison for his faith, and he also died in captivity. His theological influence is considerable, not only within his native China but also beyond and extends far beyond his own Protestant circle. In 1925, he changed his name Shu-tsu to To-sheng (watchman), for he saw himself as one who awakens people in the midst of the spiritual darkness of this time, to make clear to them that Christ's second coming is imminent.

Abraham is said to be the greatest Old Testament preacher of faith. Noah is also known as a preacher of faith. It was not their fault that their message was disparaged. Sodom would have been saved if more than ten righteous had been present. Fortunately, the world now counts more. The world is, of course, much larger than Sodom and so more righteous are required. In line with this, today, we must preach and, as they did, entreat and plead for the world, and pray for our oppressors, and the God-haters in particular. May God break open their hearts and fill them with a token of his Love so that they may repent. And don't forget to pray for our own family and friends and acquaintances, among whom are God-deniers. The weapon available to us is far more powerful than that of Noah or Abraham because our situation is fundamentally different, because as it is now: "We will overcome by the Blood of the Lamb (...) not loving our life until death." (Rev. 12:11)

How else would the Jewish people come to repentance, would the world come to repentance, if there wasn't a tremendous outpouring of the Holy Spirit? Isaiah 61:1-7 is usually applied to the Messiah and the apple of his eye Israel, but it may equally apply to his followers who are one in Christ:

«« The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the Lord has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn, to console those who mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. That they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified. They shall rebuild the old ruins, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the ruined cities, the desolations of many generations. Strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the foreigner shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers. But you shall be named the priests of the Lord. They shall call you the servants of our God. You shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory you shall boast. Instead of your shame you shall have double honor, and instead of confusion they shall rejoice in their portion. Therefore in their land they shall possess double and everlasting joy shall be theirs. »»

We are entering a time in the first half of the 21st century of great confusion, but also of God's great deeds, so that not a small remnant but a large flock may be rescued. The two witnesses of Revelation 11:3 are metaphorically speaking Christendom and the Jewish people. Not only they, not only they, pierced You when You, the beloved Saviour and sanctifier, hung on the Cross, but we also pierced You, we too, each one of us. It was actually a Roman who pierced Him, not a Jew. (John 19:34) Also the Jews will go out in the end times and at all costs preach their Messiah and proclaim Him as the God-man Jesus !! Joel 2:28-32 reads, as quoted by the Apostle Peter in his famous sermon at the first Pentecost (Acts 2:17-21):

«« It shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of my Spirit on all flesh. Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy. Your young men shall see visions and your old men shall dream dreams; even on my menservants and on my maidservants I will pour out my Spirit in those days. (...) The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome 'Day of the Lord'. And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the Name of the Lord shall be saved. »»

That the Apostle Peter, not unjustly, assumed in the early days that the Kingdom of God was about to break through, is illustrated by the following passage:

«« During forty days Jesus presented Himself to the apostles and spoke to them of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. (...) “Lord”, they asked, “will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” And He answered: “It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in his own authority, but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. »» (Acts 1:3-9)

Peter’s hopes and expectations proved vain. God’s kingship, in fact the Reign of Peace, has been postponed and Judaism has condemned itself to two thousand years of exile. While the Jewish people had been chosen by God to be a light to the nations, the Jewish leadership, while they had received proof of his resurrection, still rejected Jesus as the Messiah. Because of this stubbornness, millions of their people were lost forever.

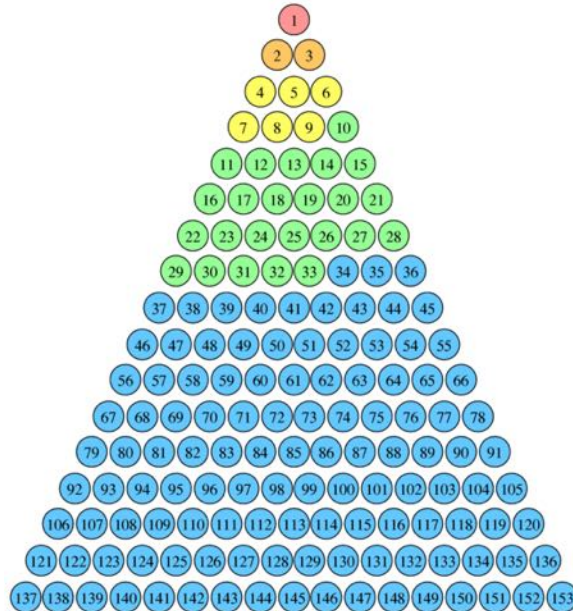
As so often, great prophetic fulfillments take place several times in a toned-down version as if the great events reflect like mirrors in the past. Thus, many antichrists have appeared, of which Hitler was one, but ‘the’ Antichrist comes only once. Just as the persecution of Christians in Roman times was a foretaste of what will await us in the Great Tribulation, so the first outpouring of the Holy Spirit, that Peter speaks of, was also but a foretaste. In the same vein, during the Great Tribulation at the end of time, of which Revelation speaks (7:14), there will also be a ‘great’ and much more powerful Pentecost. As for the ‘Day of the Lord’ (the day of judgment), spoken of by the Prophet Joel, this will be a follow-up of the Great Tribulation and Judgement of the Nations, described in Revelations 8, once to be followed by the opening of the gates of the Reign of Peace.

Driven by the Spirit, the Apostle quoted Joel, himself believing that God’s kingdom was already knocking at the door. On the basis of the events since then, we may conclude that God’s judgments, for the time in which we now live, and the infusion of the Holy Spirit are in line with each other, the latter leading up to Jesus’ Return. Who can have any doubts? Why should it be any different today than in Old Testament times? The start of God’s kingdom will concord with a strong working of the Spirit ...for the salvation of many. There will still be much struggle, for before Christ’s coming many will not yet have understood what faith is all about. Although the time of his Second Coming cannot be known, by an unprecedented outpouring of the Holy Spirit, people will be able to ascertain that the Second Coming is imminent.

26.124 – The Number 153

We have now arrived at the ‘counting’ of the account. The net was full of large fish, to be precise 153. The tetragrammaton (Yahweh) occurs 153x in Genesis. The Hebrew ‘bene ha-Elohim’ has a numerical value of 153, meaning ‘children of God’. It is striking that 153 is the sum of all numbers from 1 to 17 and is also equal to $1^3+5^3+3^3$. But that does not exhaust its mathematical properties by far. The number 153 is also a hexagonal number, and a truncated triangle number, meaning that 1, 15, and 153 are triangle numbers. The distinct prime factors of 153 add up to 20, and so do the ones of 154, hence the two form a Ruth-Aaron pair. Since $13 + 53 + 33 = 153$, it is also a 3-narcissistic number, and it is also the smallest three-digit number to be expressed as the sum of cubes of its digits. Only five other numbers have that property: 0, 1, 370, 371 and 407. It is also a Friedman number, since $153 = 3 \times 51$, and a Harshad number in base 10, being divisible by the sum of its own digits. The Biggs-Smith graph is a symmetric graph with 153 equivalent edges. Another interesting feature of 153 is that it is the limit of the following algorithm: Take a random positive integer, divisible by 3. Split that number into its base 10 digits. Take the sum of their cubes. Go back to the second step. An example hereof, starting with the number 84 shows the following evolution:

$8^3 + 4^3 =$	$512 + 64 =$	576
$5^3 + 7^3 + 6^3 =$	$125 + 343 + 216 =$	684
$6^3 + 8^3 + 4^3 =$	$216 + 512 + 64 =$	792
$7^3 + 9^3 + 2^3 =$	$343 + 729 + 8 =$	1080
$1^3 + 0^3 + 8^3 + 0^3 =$	$1 + 0 + 512 + 0 =$	513
$5^3 + 1^3 + 3^3 =$	$125 + 1 + 27 =$	153
$1^3 + 5^3 + 3^3 =$	$1 + 125 + 27 =$	153



**The number 153 is the seventeenth triangular number.
The colours show that 153 is the sum of the first 5 factorials.**

The ornaments at the bottom of the high priestly garment, which hung like a ‘fringe’, included 24 little golden bells, two for each tribe. The bells were to exhort the people to remain faithful to the Lord; it was, as it were, the voice of the Lord! Every time the high priest went to the tabernacle to lay the confessed sins of the people of Israel before God, the people knew exactly when the great moment had come for their high priest and mediator to take their confessed sins of the past day and/or night to the altar of incense. There was an honorable silence in and around the sanctuary, even the cheerful tinkling of the bells on the priestly garment, a kind of chasuble, fell silent during that solemn moment as he knelt before the face of God at the altar of incense and prayed for his people! Two priests, for each tribe, had been appointed to work in shifts. Most likely, one priest per tribe was on duty during the day, while the other was on duty at night. It was they who - metaphorically - represented the ‘voice’ of the people. And all those ‘voices’ the high priest carried with him! But the high priest was also responsible for the peoples of the earth: according to Flavius Josephus, 70 little bells hung on his official robe, but that must have been after only two of the twelve tribes had returned from exile. The remaining ten were then somewhere among the nations, so since then 70 hung from the bottom of the robe, representing the number of all the nations of the earth.¹⁷⁸⁾

The number 153 is also 9x17. Nine symbolizes God’s judgment in Christ on the sin of man. Jesus died on the Cross in the ninth hour. Matthew 5 lists the nine beatitudes that result. Paul mentions in Galatians 5 the nine fruits of the Spirit that could be commu-

¹⁷⁸⁾ Taken from an as yet unpublished book in Dutch by Bertus J. Daniëls: “The Shrine of Israel in the Desert” (Part 1) under: “The Vestments of the Priests” # 2013.

nicated to us through the sacrifice of the Cross, namely love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness and self-control. 1 Corinthians 12 lists the nine gifts of the Spirit. The number 17 means victory, because on the 17th day the people crossed the Red Sea (or Border Sea) and then sang the victory song. Jesus' resurrection was on the 17th day of the month of 'Adar'. And that is why there are 17 things that cannot separate us from the love of Christ, as enumerated in Romans 8. There are still many remarkable connections with the number 153 in the enumeration of certain words or terms (each letter has a numerical value) in both Hebrew and Greek.

A well-known explanation is that the number 153 represents all nations, for no more than 153 would have been counted in Jesus' day, at least according to Church Father Eusebius (ca. 347-420), but that does not seem convincing, because there is no list of it. Acts 2:9-11 mentions 17 languages as a listing of all the languages then spoken across the known world. The 17th occurrence of the word 'world' in the first letter of John is in verse 5:4: *"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world."*

An interesting approach is that the number 153 is composed of 2x70 plus 13. The number thirteen stands for Jesus and his twelve apostles, which points to Matthew 19:28: *"In the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon 12 thrones, judging the 12 tribes of Israel."* The number 70 refers to the number of nations listed in Genesis 10, originating from Noah's sons. We also encounter this number when God orders Moses to appoint 70 members of a kind of parliament that was going to assist him in his work. (Num. 11:16) Moses prefigures Jesus. Now Moses is one man, but the Hebrew number one (é Chad) has, in full, a numerical value of thirteen. So the one and the thirteen (Jesus and the twelve) are equivalent here. Then why would there be 2x70 members of parliament in the Reign of Peace? Because, in the umbrella organization every nation is represented by a man and a woman. In their complementarity, according to the word of Genesis 2:24, they are symbolically one flesh and therefore 2x70 equals 1x70, a thought that will appeal female readers. As far as those 2x12 bells are concerned, it is interesting that we see a twofold here and that is why it is not so odd to also apply a twofold to the 70 who sit in the umbrella organization of the Reign of Peace.

As a member of the 140, a non-Israelite has therefore not become an Israelite, but takes part in Christ's king- and priesthood according to the words of the Peter letter: *"But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy people, a people whom God made his own."* (1 Peter 2:9) Of course, there is no king without a kingdom and that kingdom is Israel, which gives moral guidance to a kind of United Nations with which all kingdoms on earth are connected. People only get a seat on that board who have been predestined for that task, the board would become otherwise overcrowded.

Jesus is referred to in the beginning of the Book of Revelation as ruler of the kings of the earth to whom, according to Revelation 15:4 *"all nations shall come to worship Him"*, and later in chapter 19 He is described as *"the king of kings and the Lord of lords"*. Let us therefore give Him that honor, He who, according to many Old Testament prophecies, is primarily a king of Israel. Isaiah 2:2-4 announces:

«« In future, the mountain with the Lord's Temple will be the highest of all. It will reach above all hills (nations). Every nation will rush to it and mighty nations will say: *"Let us go to the mountain of the Lord God of Jacob and worship in his temple."* From Zion his teachings sound, from Jerusalem the Lord speaks and settle arguments between nations. They will pound their swords and their spears into rakes and shovels; they will never make war or attack one another. »»

That is the goal towards which the world is running and to which humanity is being prepared for:

«« And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming. (...) Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. Now, when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near! »» (Luke 21:25-28)



APPENDIX 17

The 153 who received a Direct Blessing from Jesus

- With many changes, based on a concept on the Internet.

Quite a new thought has recently emerged, which states that amongst the multitudes who have received at least one blessing from Jesus during his mission – as from Jesus' indwelling in the Most Holy Virgin Mary until his ascent to heaven – there are recorded 153 individuals! That fits with the great catch of the apostles when exactly 153 fishes were caught. Included are persons who request a healing for someone else, as in the case of Jairus (no. 8). If any name appears to be missing, it will be found on examination that there is good reason for it: for instance, the apostle Nathanael is the same as Bartimeus. A controversial subject is whether the woman from Luke 7:37, Mattheuw 26:7, Luke 10:39 and John 11:1 is the same as mentioned in Luke 8:2, where she is called Maria Magdalen. I follow an old and established tradition that agrees with a number of visions of several visionaries, pointing to the fact that in all cases it is the same woman. There are a number of instances where similar healings in different gospels are likely to involve different persons, which might be concluded from the different narrative style, but since this is uncertain, similar healings are considered to be the same.

Though the three Magi, Matthias and Barsabas (Acts 1:23), Barnabas (Acts 4:36) as well as Stephen, with many others, without any doubt received blessing from Jesus himself, yet it is not so mentioned; in other cases, like in Matthew 8:16, there is no mention of the number of people involved, and therefore those cases are ignored.

A principle of being blessed is always the acceptance of a particular blessing, and therefore the man of Luke 9:59 is not included, because it is not clear whether he followed the invitation of Jesus to follow Him. Maria Valtorta tells that indeed he followed Jesus, but only after Jesus gave some more convincing arguments. That does not follow from the Biblical account. Judas, on the other hand, is included because he followed Jesus and it was only later that he became disloyal.

The following is the list of countable cases mentioned in the Bible where Jesus gave a direct blessing: in total 50 cases with 153 individual blessings. The number in between brackets is the number of persons blessed on that occasion. The number 50 relates to Pentecost, when fifty days after the resurrection the pouring forth of the Holy Spirit occurred, which from then on would become the driving force for the 'great restoration', let's say the healing of humanity. The Jubilee year is described as follow: "*You shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a Jubilee unto you; and you shall return every man unto his possession, and you shall return every man unto his family.*" (Lev. 25:10)

01. (2x) Elisabeth and John the Baptist (in the womb) – Luke 1:41
02. (1x) Simeon, in the Temple – Luke 2:28
03. (1x) The leper – Matthew 8:2
04. (2x) Centurion and servant – Matthew 8:5
05. (1x) Peter's mother in law – Matthew 8:14
06. (1x) A new disciple – Matthew 8:21
07. (5x) Palsied man and his four bearers – Matthew 9:2, Mark 2:3
08. (2x) Jairus and his daughter, who had died – Matthew 9:18
09. (1x) Woman with issue of blood – Matthew 9:21
10. (2x) Blind men – Matthew 9:27
11. (1x) Dumb and possessed man – Matthew 9:32
12. (12x) Twelve Apostles – Matthew 10:2

13. (1x) Man with withered hand – Matthew 12:10
14. (1x) The blind, dumb and possessed man – Matthew 12:22
15. (2x) Syrophenician woman and her daughter – Matthew 15:28
16. (2x) Lunatic child and father – Matthew 17:18
17. (2x) Two blind men (Jesus leaving Jericho) – Matthew 20:30
18. (1x) Simon the leper – Matthew 26:6
19. (1x) Man with unclean spirit – Mark 1:23
20. (1x) Man, deaf and with impediment in speech – Mark 7:32
21. (1x) The blind Bartimeus (coming to Jericho)* – Mark 10:52 / Lucas 18:42
22. (1x) Blind man of Betsaida – Mark 8:22
23. (2x) Son of the widow of Nain – Luke 7:12
24. (1x) Mary Magdalene – Luke 8:2
25. (1x) Joanna – Luke 8:3
26. (1x) Susanna – Luke 8:3
27. (1x) The man possessed by a legion of demons – Luke 8:35
28. (70x) The seventy disciples – Luke 10:1
29. (1x) Martha, the sister of Mary Magdalene – Luke 10:38
30. (1x) Woman with infirmity – Luke 13:11
31. (1x) Man with dropsy – Luke 14:2
32. (10x) The ten lepers – Luke 17:12-14
33. (1x) Man born blind – John 9:7
34. (1x) Nicodemus – John 3:1-21, 19:39
35. (1x) Woman of Samaria – John 4:7
36. (2x) Nobleman and sick son – John 4:46
37. (1x) Impotent man at the Pool of Bethesda – John 5:5-9
38. (1x) Woman taken in adultery – John 8:11
39. (1x) Zaccheus – Luke 19:5
40. (1x) Lazarus – John 11:43
41. (1x) Claudia Procula, the wife of Pontius Pilate – Matthew 27:19
42. (1x) Malchus – Luke 22:51, John 18:10
43. (1x) Simon of Cyrene – Matthew 27:32
44. (1x) Penitent murderer on the cross – Luke 23:43
45. (1x) Mary, the Mother of Jesus – John 19:25
46. (1x) Centurion – Matthew 27:54
47. (1x) Salome, the mother of Zebedee's children – Matthew 27:56
48. (1x) Mary, the mother of James and wife of Cleopas – Matthew 27:56
49. (1x) Joseph of Arimathea – Matthew 27:57
50. (2x) The disciples at Emmaus – Luke 24:13

* The blind Bartimeus of no. 21 was healed "*as He was come nigh unto Jericho*" (Luke 18:35), and therefore is additional to the two who were healed as Jesus left Jericho the next day (no. 17). Marc 10:46 states that Jesus came to Jericho and left again, which can only be understood as movements on the same day and not on the next one as in no. 17. If one enters the city and leaves it makes no sense, because going in presupposes going out, unless the order is very close together. Luke and Mark speak of the same man, Bartimeus. There is nothing else in the two accounts that seems to contradict that. What Jesus was doing in Jericho before He made that retreat is unclear. Perhaps He first bought some bread to eat in the field outside the city and then re-entered Jericho to "*to pass through it*" (Luke 19:1).

APPENDIX 18

THE LAST CATCH OF FISH

Message by J.N.S.R. of August 25, 2009

My most sweet Lord, Pardon and Mercy for us sinners.

I thank You, my sweet Jesus, for this boundless Grace You give to the World, and also for having chosen me to convey it. I pray your Kind Heart, to keep in your divine Sacred Heart, all those who, along with me, must also continue the work of GOD, through the books that may still be written according to your Adorable and Holy Almighty Will.



JESUS: You are to make aware those who are chosen, to continue and to obey, because this choice is from the Father of all Goodness, and that upon reading this Divine Work, some convert and follow in the footsteps of GOD.

Each soul honouring Me with such obedience is called a fisher of men, and with the same net, each shall pull in the number of souls assigned to him and I will say to him: *“Happy are you who make this fishing fruitful, for it is the last one to be done in the Name of the Lord.”* And so, the nets have been cast.

I shall count the fishes in each net. Blessed this Master who has such good fishers of men! Happy is your GOD who already counts his good workers, for the ocean is huge, and the fishing is like a tide coming up. It can only be organized now, for GOD is still taking advantage of this tide which brings Him the numbers anticipated of these fishes, that keep escaping over and over again, out of the nets that have come back on the shore, overflowing with fishes of all sizes and preferred qualities. But the numbers vary from one tide to the next.

With this last tide, the numbers are not yet sufficient. Will they come, those big fishes that the Master is waiting for on the shore? They are the last ones expected, for it was impossible for them to enter the net, already full of smaller fishes and of a size other than the huge ones expected by the Lord.



So, the Master is gazing at the horizon where the sun is coming in view. Its rays are warming up the waters and already the froth of the waves wreathes the shores that remain transparent. This is the last moment. The wind tries the sea to pull back and it is at that very moment that the last catch of fish will come to an end, when the horizon is glittering with a thousand lights.

The Master gives notice to all his workers, to all his fishers of men, that at the sound of his last trumpet, everyone must stop working and begin to count the fish.

That catch that does not appear to be one hundred percent fruitful. Will it become so upon hearing the last call? So, what happens will be known by some fishers of men, with the Master always on the shore that is growing larger.

Those big fishes, most of them abusers of humankind, fear the coming judgment, and see from afar the penetrating look of the great Master. And that's why they dare not approach.

The Master begins to raise His arm to bring the trumpet to his lips that are still praying to the Father to forgive them. And before the sound resonates through the air, the heads of the big fishes come up between the last waves. Then, the very last wave drags with it all the late-comers, all those that the persons, good and sensitive, would not reach on this shore, except GOD who waits tirelessly, He, the Merciful Lord who forgives, even on his Cross, the thieves, the Good one as well as the Wicked one!

You also, must be good and charitable as your Lord Jesus.

Pray, pray, pray to Jesus and Mary for poor sinners.

Jesus and Mary in prayer. Amen.



• *Because of Zion* •

A Christian Perspective



The First Jewish War (66-70 after Chr.), fecit David Roberts (1850)

Characteristic of the history of the people of Israel is their everlasting longing for Zion, for Jerusalem, for the Holy City. That desire began in the Babylonian Exile and has persisted even after centuries of diaspora, pogroms and death camps. For centuries, Christians have contributed to this oppression: for Jews the name of 'Christian' was synonymous with 'Jew Hater'. But in the course of time we have seen a countermovement come into being, one consisting of Christians who support the Jews. In this article we take a look at Zionistic tendencies in church history and at the place of Christian Zionism in our present constellation. Christian Zionism means: "We as Christians wish the Jews all that is good". And of course this cannot be seen separate from their national aspirations, to be once more a people in their own land. From this point of view, being a Christian means that a reassessment is required of the theological paradigm regarding the place of the people of Israel in God's great plan of salvation; a reassessment that has begun. This too is brought to the fore, and here you'll find a remarkable analysis of what exactly the covenant renewal at Calvary means from the legal perspective – which is a covenant fulfilled by Jesus, a Jew, for the Jews, and for their brethren in Christ.

27.125 – Next Year in Jerusalem!

How great can the desire be to go to Jerusalem! We find a moving example of that in the Spanish Judah Halevi, one of the greatest figures in Jewish history. Fittingly, he was selected by Dan Cohn-Sherbok as one of the fifty key Jewish thinkers in the history of Judaism from post-biblical times up to the present day.¹⁷⁹⁾ I now like to quote about this figure from "A Short History of The Jewish People", a major standard work of the Jewish literature, written by Cecil Roth:

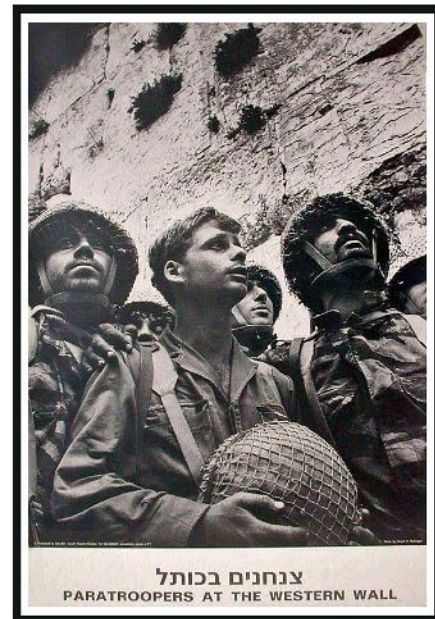
¹⁷⁹⁾ "Fifty Key Jewish Thinkers" by Rabbi Professor Dan Cohn-Sherbok - Routledge, London, New York # 1997.

«« The humanistic tradition of Spanish Jewry reached its climax with Judah Halevi. Born in Central Spain, he had the breadth of outlook derived from a first-hand acquaintance with three cultures – the Christian, the Arabic, and the Jewish. By profession a physician, he was by vocation a poet. Never perhaps has any other person acquired such extraordinary mastery over a language no longer ordinarily spoken. His inspiration soars above the self-imposed shackles of Arabic prosody – the artificial metrical structure, the acrostics at the beginning of each line and the monotonous jingling rhyme at the end. Nothing Jewish, and nothing human, was strange to his muse – neither the pleasures of friendship, nor the ecstasies of passion, nor the grandeurs of nature, nor the mysteries of religion. Above all, he developed a transcendental passion for the Holy Land: and his hymns to Zion compare in their heart-rending appeal to the greatest love-lyrics in world literature. »»»

After having decided to go to the Holy Land, Halevi travelled to the metropolis Alexandria in 1140. Four months later he sailed to Palestine where he died upon his arrival. It is told that as he arrived in sight of Jerusalem, he flung himself in ecstasy to the ground. A passing Arab horseman spurred his steed over the recumbent body, ...and the poet sobbed out his life with the immortal cadences of his greatest ode to Zion.

Zion is a word rich with resonance. Originally part of Jerusalem, it quickly gained the poetical meaning of the place where the Temple stood, and in that sense was also seen as the place where God dwelt. Eventually it came to mean the whole city and, by extension, the entire country. It illustrates how closely Zion, or Jerusalem, is tied up with the Jewish religion itself, which makes it somewhat strange to want to make an international city of Jerusalem that would not belong to the Jews, and yet it's the beating heart of Judaism.¹⁸⁰⁾ Politically this is scarcely necessary: a joint management of the holy places suffices, of those that are of importance to the various major religions.

During the Six Day War, a war not sought by Israel, the state was presented on a platter with the city – which, until then, had been under Jordanian rule. This can be seen as a miracle, a gift of God. That is how I see it, and many in Israel agree. Jerusalem was reconquered on 7th June 1967. Here I write quite deliberately reconquered rather than conquered. The historic photo here of the paratroopers at the Wailing Wall, was taken on that memorable day.



Despite the unimaginably long period of exile, the desire to return to Jerusalem – and to see the Temple rebuilt – was always present. It has, as it were, become part of their national character. In July 2009, the Panels Institute held a survey among the adult Jewish population, which showed that 64% want the Temple to be rebuilt. Initially the respondents were asked what happened on Tisha B'Ab (9th of the month Ab). They showed impressive knowledge: 97% knew that the first and the second Temple were

180) In the peace proposal for the Middle East of May 2009 President Obama and King Abdullah II of Jordan wanted to take from Israel sovereignty over East Jerusalem and the Old City, including the Temple Mount and the Wailing Wall. The Old City would have then become an international zone controlled by the United Nations.

destroyed on that particular day. A breakdown showed that not only the religious-minded look forward to a reconstruction of the Temple, but also the traditional public (91%) and almost half of the seculars (47%).

For generation upon generation the participants prayed at the Pesach Seder (Easter Meal), commemorating the end of the Egyptian exile: *"Next year in Jerusalem, rebuilt and inhabited again!"* This unlikely proclamation has come true in front of our very eyes. Those who deny its importance or resist its deeper meaning are bereft of hope. Because of this repeated wish there can be no thought of legal limitation of the right to ownership of the country. A claim or a right is not subject to the statute of limitations if the period of claim or right is brought to mind in a suitable fashion before the period runs out. Thus the Jewish claim to the land was always renewed and because of that remained legally valid. It goes without saying that the Jewish people's right to ownership of the land of Israel does not exclude peaceful coexistence with the peoples already established there and with the peoples who have settled there more recently. But what if the other party themselves (the Islamic Arabs) oppose the very principle of peaceful coexistence? That is a hard problem to stomach.

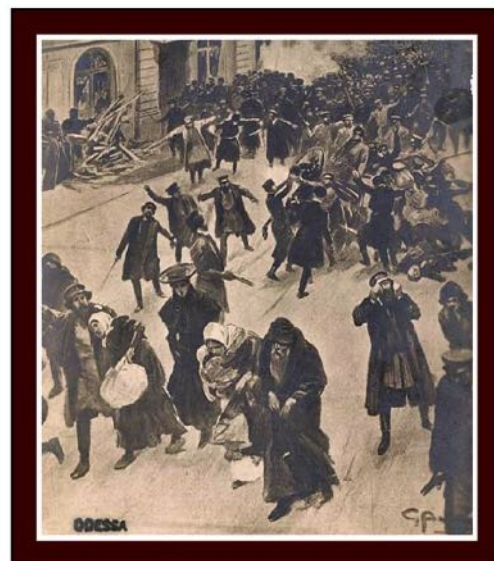
Israel has always been foreign rule since 332 BC, the year that Alexander the Great appropriated it. In those more than 2000 years ever since it has never been an independent nation. The recent return of the Jewish people to the land of their fathers and the establishment of an independent state was in every way a unique happening. And not just unique: unbelievable too. It defies logic, and yet we saw it happen.

The Pogroms

Pogrom is a Russian word designating an attack, accompanied by destruction, looting of property, and personal attacks, perpetrated by one section of the population against another. The Jews of Russia were the victims of three large-scale waves of pogroms. These occurred between the years 1881 and 1884, between 1903 and 1906, and between 1917 and 1921. There were also outbreaks in Poland after it regained independence in 1918, and finally in Romania as from 1921. The first occurred in the town of Elisabethgrad in the Ukraine, at the end of April 1881. From there, the pogrom-wave spread to the surrounding villages.

27.126 – (Christian) Zionism from the beginning until now

Zionism (the longing for Zion), as a principle has always existed, as witnessed by Psalm 137: *"By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept when we remembered Zion"*. But as something that is practically implemented, it is a relatively new phenomenon. Modern Zionism can be traced back to the 1882 founding of the BILU, an acronym for "Beit Ya'akov Lekhu Ve-nelkha", taken from Isaiah 2:5: *"House of Jacob, let's go [up]!"* Eight years after the founding of the BILU, the term 'Zionism' was introduced by Nathan Birnbaum in his journal Selbstemanzipation, meaning the establishment of agricultural settlements, since that was the aim at the time; until the 1930s the



religious motive played hardly any part at all. It was not a religious motive, but the Russian pogroms that gave the push to return to the land of the fathers. Pogrom is a name for more or less organised popular riots that like lightning turned on the Jews. The first one happened in the Ukraine in 1881.

Christian Zionism, also known as Restorationism, dates from the 17th century. Joanna and Ebenezer Cartwright, two English Puritans living in Amsterdam, requested the revolutionary English parliament in 1649 to repeal the edict banning Jews, which later happened. Their argumentation was as follows: “...that this Nation of England, with the inhabitants of the Netherlands, shall be the first and readiest to transport Izraells sons and daughters in their ships to the Land promised to their forefathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob for an everlasting inheritance.” Their reading of the Old Testament taught the Puritans that after the coming of Christ, God was still favourably disposed towards the Jews. Indeed in Romans 11:28-29 we read: “Concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers. For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.” Disagreements occur in the best of families, and one like this does not leave a lasting impression. This Protestant theology meant a remarkable turn-around, because up till then the Christians had regarded the land of Palestine as their own inalienable inheritance. Nobody talked about the rights of the Jews!¹⁸¹⁾ The Crusades, organised to conquer the land for Christians, were seen at the time as a completely logical and acceptable initiative. In Puritan circles people started to think otherwise so that the conviction took hold that the Messiah would not appear on earth again until the Jews once more inhabited the Holy Land. A number of people took centre stage here: the theologian Thomas Brightman (1562-1607), the member of parliament Sir Henry Finch (1558-1625), but also Colonel George Gawler (1796-1869) – and, not to be forgotten, Lord Shaftesbury (1801-1885), who promoted the cause of a Jewish homeland.

Due to a number of disappointments involving false messiahs, the Jews were at the time not overkeen on this type of idea, and certainly not when the idea came from the Christians, who had shown to be murderers of Jews. It is only in recent times that their suspicions with regard to Christian Zionism have disappeared – nay, the notion has even been enthusiastically embraced. After the evangelical movement had pledged its support for Israel during the second Intifada (the Palestinian revolt), the late Dr. Yuri Stern, a Jew, established in 2004 the KCAC or the Knesset Christian Allies Caucus (the Knesset is the Israeli parliament).

The positive influence of the Bridges for Peace, founded in 1976 and the International Christian Embassy in Jerusalem (ICEJ), both established in Jerusalem in 1980, will have contributed to this, and it is of course also thanks to Christians for Israel (C4I), which was founded in 1979. These Christian Zionist organizations made it very clear that they had no intention of evangelizing the Jews, and they forged friendship with Jewish leaders. The still unfulfilled hope seems to have been that with this approach they would eventually open the hearts of the people to the message of the Gospel, in a way that was beyond normal evangelism.

The KCAC organizes meetings between politicians, Christian preachers and business people all over the world. It has grown to become the largest parliamentary committee in Israel. At the time of its establishment, the leaders in Jerusalem of the Catholic, Syrian-Orthodox, Episcopal and Lutheran churches expressed their strong disapproval

181) There is an essential difference between 17th century Jewish messianic thinking and Puritanism. The former assumed mainly that the return to the fatherland would be simultaneous with the coming of the Messiah while the latter saw the advent as happening once the return had taken place, a position later adopted by the Jews too.

of this movement and spoke in a common declaration *“of an alliance with segments of the Israeli government (...) that will inevitably lead to endless cycles of violence.”*¹⁸²⁾

It was not just the KCAC that came in for extreme criticism. Even in the Netherlands we see that - still! - any form of unconditional support for Israel is rejected. The so-called SoW churches, issuing from a fusion between the Dutch Reformed Church, the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands and the Evangelical Lutheran Church, published a memorandum in 2004 entitled “The Israeli-Palestinian-Arab Conflict” in which only one organization is mentioned and rejected: Christians for Israel (C4I), established in the Netherlands. Their vision is seen as contrary to that of the Protestant Church in the Netherlands (PKN). Multiple PKN spokespersons during that period demonized C4I in no uncertain terms, there is no other word for it, thereby having the pretension to represent their entire constituency, which is, of course, far from the truth.¹⁸³⁾

• Now follows a detailed description of the major Christian organizations that are making a positive contribution to Judaism and the State of Israel (situation of 2009):

Christians for Israel (C4I) is a non-denominational movement. Its co-founder, Karel van Oordt, has always said that C4I started out as an international, not Dutch, organization. No doubt the work of Christians for Israel has contributed to the improved relations between Christians and Jews and also to the establishment of the KCAC. C4I is the only European-based Christian ministry seeking to promote a positive attitude in the Church towards Israel. C4I does not evangelize or support the Evangelization to the Jewish people. Their calling towards Israel is simple: “Comfort, comfort ye my people”. On the contrary, Christians for Israel, as an organization, has a message for the Christian Church, regardless of denomination or Church affiliation, that they must urgently turn from their traditional attitude towards the land of Israel and the Jews. And this is the main reason why they do not have an office in Israel, and why they seek to support the Jewish people through Jewish organizations. C4I’s credo is that Christians of all denominations and backgrounds should be united in their love for the Jewish people, in their support for the State of Israel and in their collective repentance because of Jewish suffering throughout church history. Via their network of branches in Europe, the Americas, Africa and Asia they disseminate a variety of educational resources and teaching materials. C4I supports the work of Keren Heyesod (United Israel Appeal) and the Jewish Agency (Government organizations in Israel) to bring the Ethiopian Jews called “the Falash Muras” home to Israel. They are also actively involved in providing help to survivors of terror attacks in cooperation with the Henini Foundation in Jerusalem.

Bridges For Peace, the oldest organization, is a Jerusalem-based, Bible-believing Christian organization supporting Israel and building relationships between Christians and Jews. They are most active in the English speaking countries of the world. Through their contacts they like to express God’s love and mercy as the surest way of fellowship. “*It is our desire*”, says the mission statement, “*to see Christians and Jews working side by side for a better understanding of and a more secure Israel.*” This they wish to accomplish through educational programs and social assistance: they assist Jewish immigrants in Israel, Israel’s elderly and poor; and also help prepare the poorest Jews from the countries of the Diaspora (the dispersion) to emigrate to Israel (Project Rescue); and they help to sustain those who cannot come, mostly the elderly and the sick (Project Hope).

As regards the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem (ICEJ): it was founded in 1980 as an evangelical Christian response to the need to comfort Zion according to the

182) “De Volkskrant” (Dutch daily newspaper), 16 Oct. 2006, section Buitenland (p. 4).

183) Contr. by Jaap de Vreugd in “Israël en de Kerk”, Febr. 2009, 7/4 (pp. 28-34).

command of Scripture found in Isaiah 40:1-2: “*Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem...*” Currently it represents millions of believers who share a love and concern for the land of Israel and the Jewish people. The ICEJ has active representation in nearly 80 countries. As an ambassador of Jesus, it seeks to show a different face of Christianity to a Jewish people deeply scarred by centuries of Church-led anti-Semitism, so says their mission statement. The ICEJ engages in social assistance projects: it has always been involved in supporting ‘aliyah’ – the return of the Jewish people to the land of Israel – while giving practical assistance to help the absorption of new immigrants once they arrive. Their Nursing Homecare Program provides assistance and physical care to elderly and disabled immigrants, while trying to care for their social, emotional and spiritual well-being.

27.127 – Evangelization among the Jews

An organization that firmly believes that support to Israel should not in any way include missionary activity towards the Jews is the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews (IFCJ), located in both Chicago and Jerusalem. IFCJ is a Jewish organization that seeks ties with Christians. Its director is Yechiel Eckstein, an Orthodox rabbi. In 2008 IFCJ raised 75 million dollars, which proves that it is an important organization. And then there is the Christians United for Israel (CUFI), which also strongly opposes proselytising. It provides an association through which every pro-Israel church, parachurch organization, ministry or individual in America can speak and act with one another. David Brog is its executive director. Though he is a Jew, CUFI is a Christian and not a Jewish organization. Its chairman and founder is John Hagee, a well-known figure in the United States. He is the senior pastor of Cornerstone Church in San Antonio, Texas, a non-denominational charismatic church with more than 19,000 active members. In view of the foregoing, it should come as no surprise that the KCAC has specifically stated that whoever wishes to convert the Jews is excluded from collaboration.

While Christian-Zionist initiatives strove unflinchingly until the end of the 19th century for the conversion of the Jewish people to Christianity, the Evangelicals have learned to see that the way to the heart of the Jew is through an unconditional expression of friendship. Generally, they now take a cautious stand, sometimes perhaps too cautious. Ajith Fernando in his concluding remarks on the Book of Acts admonishes that we must never forget Paul’s affirmation of his passion for mission: Salvation was “*first for the Jew, then for the Gentile*”.¹⁸⁴⁾ (Rom. 1:16) He continues:

«« However, as the founder of “Jews for Jesus”, Moishe Rosen said at the Lausanne II Congress in Manila in 1989 that the Jewish people are among the most gospel-resistant people in the world. The report of that Congress gives reasons for this: “*Folk memories of the horrors of the Middle Ages die hard: to many Jewish people, the name of Christ invokes only the remembrance of state persecution; the cross only the image of the sword; and the very word ‘mission’, only the experience of coercive proselytization.*” Unlike in Paul’s day, the Christian evangelist should go to the Jews with an attitude of repentance for what Christians have done to them in the past. »»

It is now the Christian Jews who are occupied with the task of Evangelization – by, for instance, organising a performance of a wonderful Hebrew version of Händel’s Messiah. The first official performances were held on 4th and 5th April 2007 in Jerusalem. There are also other initiatives that ‘are’ aimed at Evangelization, with Jews for Jesus being the most obvious. It is the conviction of Jews for Jesus, expressed in the May 2009 issue

184) “The NIV Application Commentary – ACTS” by Ajith Fernando - Zondervan Publ. House, Michigan #1998 (p. 628).

of their newsletter, that Jewish people in Israel are more open to the Gospel message than any other community in the world today! Much has happened in twenty years, since the Manila Congress. Says David Brickner, the Executive Director:

«« The responses we've seen to our Behold Your God Israel campaigns have signaled us that now is the time to make an all out effort to make the Saviour known in the Land of Israel. (...) Now more than ever is the time for true Christian Zionists to open their eyes to the phenomenal opportunity to take part in that original vision to [let the Jews] have a restored relationship with God through Jesus. »»

The mission statement of Jews for Jesus is: *"We exist to make the messiahship of Jesus an unavoidable issue to our Jewish people worldwide."* The organization was founded in the United States in 1973 and opened an office in Tel Aviv in 1980. Its main work in the land of Israel is one-on-one Bible study with people who take a leaflet or see an ad or otherwise get interested in Jesus and want to know more, an approach that meets with considerable hostility. The Jerusalem Post featured an article on the topic on February 12th 2009, written by Larry Derfner, called "Jesus for Jews". Here are some excerpts:

«« Messianic Jews have a terrible name in this country. Israelis who don't know any of them personally tend to be afraid of them. The community is widely viewed as a secretive cult that picks off vulnerable Jews and converts them to Christianity. There are at least two Haredi 'antimissionary' organizations: Yad L'achim or 'Hand to Brethren', and Lev L'achim or 'Heart for Brethren', that go to the limits of the law, if not beyond, to expose and harass them. The Haredi activists (non-Zionist and anti-Zionist ultra-orthodox Jews) try to get Messianic leaders ostracized in their neighborhoods by putting up pashkevilim, or attack posters, with their photographs. (...) Yad L'achim (whose stated goal is *"fighting Christian missionaries"*) fully acknowledges sending undercover spies into the Messianics' congregations, reporting on them to the Interior Ministry to prevent members from entering the country, making aliya or getting citizenship. Yad L'achim also does this with Hare Krishna, Scientology, Jehovah's Witnesses and other religious or quasi-religious sects that proselytize in Israel. (...) At times Messianics have been targeted for serious violence. Congregation buildings in Jerusalem and Kiryat Yam have been firebombed, both times in the middle of the night, causing no injuries. The Beersheba community's baptismal was once stormed by Haredi activists, while in Arad, Messianics on their way to prayer on Saturdays are often spat on and cursed by local Haredim. (...)

My own impression of the Messianic Jews, though, is that they are a benign bunch – native Israelis and immigrants who usually came from outside society's mainstream, who were spiritually hungry and found a new 'faith community'. Of the estimated 7,000 Messianic Jews here in Israel, as many as half are recent Russian immigrants who were not raised Jewish. *"There are very few of what I call 'kosher Jews' – regular Israeli Jews with a Jewish-born mother and Jewish-born father - in our congregation"*, said William, a Christian Zionist from the West who's lived here many years. Kashtan, Sered and Ofer, who are all three Messianic Jews, live with their families in secular neighbourhoods. They neither advertise nor hide their beliefs, yet report no antagonism from their neighbours or any kind of ostracism or taunting of their children at school – even, in Kashtan's and Sered's cases, after being denounced in pashkevilim. The Messianics say it's only militant Orthodox Jews who give them problems; the mainstream Israeli Jews they live among are completely tolerant. »»

In the Voice of the Martyrs issue of March 2010 a number of instances were mentioned of violent persecution: Oct. 23, 2007 – arsonists firebomb a church in West Jerusalem

shared by Baptists and Messianic Jews; March 20, 2008 – Ami Ortiz, a dual American citizen and son of a Messianic Jewish pastor, is seriously wounded at a bomb explosion in his home in the West Bank settlement of Ariel, a town called the capital of Samaria; May 15, 2008 – residents of Or Yehuda publicly burn hundreds of New Testaments in front of a synagogue while students dance around the burning books. It should be said that these are exceptions. However, they show the emotions involved, which could easily escalate if ever an orthodox rabbi dares to switch camps.

The number of Messianic Jews in Israel is generally believed to be anywhere between 6,000 and 15,000 members, including the mainly Messianic Jewish village of Yad Ha-Shmona, near Jerusalem. According to the Union of Messianic Believers, as of 2009 the total number of Messianic congregations in Israel was nearly 200, consisting mainly of small groups, more something like home groups. The Messianic Jewish movement creates the appearance that a wall still separates the Jewish believers from the goyim, or Christians from the nations. But that is not the case. Says Arnold Fruchtenbaum, the director of Ariel Ministries that evangelizes Jews, while speaking for the Messianic congregations worldwide and more in particular in the United States:

«« We are not dealing with a situation where Messianic congregations are ‘for Jews only’. I do not know of a single Messianic congregation where there would be a bylaw that says that Gentile Christians need not apply for membership. As far as I know, every Messianic congregation has Gentile members, and in a great number of them, if not the majority of them, there are more Gentile members than Jewish ones. I even know of some that are totally Gentile without a single Jewish member. Even the ‘rabbi’ is a Gentile. That being the case, Messianic congregations are hardly guilty of re-creating the dividing wall separating Jews from Gentiles. The situation here, then, has to do with a chosen style of worship and practice rather than with creating a wall of division. »» ¹⁸⁵⁾

27.128 – The Vatican and the Jewish Question

It is difficult to decide what the correct attitude is towards Judaism. Evangelization of Jews by Jews seems to be the best solution but that does not have to keep Christians back from witnessing to the hope they have, to proclaim Jesus as King of the Jews, the Messiah for whom the Jewish people have waited so long. Only there lies Israel’s salvation, also politically. We do the Jews a disservice if we keep quiet about this. Who must we rather obey: man or God? It is not a simple matter. The dividing line between expressing one’s convictions and active Evangelization cannot be sharply drawn. A point of conflict is the age-old question of whether Jesus Christ is the Messiah promised to Israel, whether He is the God incarnate, which touches the doctrine of Deuteronomy 24:16: “*Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor shall the children be put to death for their fathers; a person shall only be put to death for his own sin.*” But Jesus is no ordinary person, He is also God and therefore He could make propitiation for our sins. In this way the Biblical rule remained in force. Being God, unblemished, Jesus alone and no one else could carry the curse that was meant for us. (Deut. 21:22-23, Hebr. 2:17, 1 John 2:2) There is also the tentatizing question of the meaning of ‘New Covenant’. Was it made with the Christian Church rather than with Israel? Christian theology, and Vatican theology in particular, has always insisted that the Church has replaced Israel. It really shouldn’t have been a point of discussion, since Hebrews 8:8, based on Jeremiah 31:31, very clearly states that the partners to the Holy Covenant are the same in both cases of Old and New Covenant, namely God and the Houses of Israel and Judah:

185) A contribution by Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum in “How Jewish is Christianity”, edited by Stanley N. Gundry and Louis Goldberg – Zondervan Publications, Grand Rapids U.S.A. # 2003 (p. 73).

«« For if that first covenant had been flawless then no place would have been sought for a second. Because finding fault with them, He says in Jeremiah: *“Behold, the days are coming, tells the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the House of Israel and with the House of Judeah.”* »»

In our generation we are witnesses of the signs that we are entering a new dispensation, where the curse of Isaiah 29:10, referred to in Romans 11:25, has been rescinded in favor of Isaiah 29:18: *“In that day the deaf shall hear the words of the Book, and the eyes of the blind shall see, [coming] out of obscurity and out of darkness.”* Olivier Rota studied Catholic philosemitism in course of the 19th and 20th centuries. He begins his study with: *“We locate the first Catholic emphasis on a properly spiritual and conversionist response to Jewish permanence in modern times around the 1840s.”*¹⁸⁶⁾ Near the beginning of his work Frédéric Gugelot explores the number of converts:¹⁸⁷⁾

«« It is difficult to estimate the number of converts who passed from Judaism to Christianity, and, more particularly in the French context, to Catholicism during these two centuries. Baptized on April 14, 1827, Théodore Ratisbonne noted: *“People feared the glare that my conversion would cause in the Synagogue. (...) At that time the conversion of a Jew was rare and almost unheard of.”*¹⁸⁸⁾ *No one could dream of granting me baptism unless it was conferred under conditions of absolute secrecy.”* This remark by one of the early converts in our study confirms the rarity of his case [but secrecy was also called for because of the tremendous commotion and repercussions, caused by Drach’s ostentatious baptism, that were still fresh in memory].¹⁸⁹⁾ Le Roi’s estimate is 1800 converts to Christianity in France in the 19th century, of which 1200 to Catholicism [which, though small in number, is nonetheless evidence of a turnaround in the tide]. »»

We should not exaggerate as if waves of conversions were taking place, and it must be said that since the 1840s some periods have been more favorable to conversion than others. That there were conversions at all, borders on the incredible because the Roman Church had not yet cast off its prejudices about Judaism in God’s plan for the world¹⁹⁰⁾ – that came about by not taking the Old Testament really seriously – and it regarded no-baptism as no-salvation, which the pew-sitting Catholics elevated to the ranks of dogma.¹⁹¹⁾ More specifically, most conversions have followed from Jews who had broken with their religious practice, at least in spirit, before embracing Catholicism. Alphonse, Théodore’s brother, was baptized fifteen years later, and about his journey to conversion, he typically says: *“My religious education was almost nil. (...) I was taught Hebrew in order to say prayers in that language, but, tired of not understanding what I was saying, I began to recite them in French, and soon I came to give up all prayer.”* This happened when he was about fifteen years old. He says: *“From that age until about twenty three I lived without any religion, even without believing in God”* [reason why his brother

186) “Essai sur le philosémitisme catholique: entre le premier et le second Vatican.” (Essay on Catholic Philosemitism: between the First and the Second Vatican Council) by Olivier Rota - Artois Presses Université, 2012 (online edition).

187) “De Ratisbonne à Lustiger – Les convertis à l’époque contemporaine” (From Ratisbonne to Cardinal Lustiger - Converts in our Contemporary Age) by Frédéric Gugelot - Archives Juives # 2002/1 (Vol. 35, pp. 8-26) The quote from Marie-Théodore Ratisbonne is from “Mes souvenirs” - Presses monastiques # 1966 (p. 143).

188) In earlier times, there were occasional and quiet conversions of Jews, who, after having read the Zohar, recognized that our Messiah was also theirs. The Zohar is much older than the Talmud and unmistakably points to the truth of the Triune God.

189) Chevalier Drach gives a full account of his conversion, baptism and the subsequent reactions of the Jewish community in “De l’harmonie entre l’Église et la Synagogue” # 1844 (T. 1, pp. 66-89; 249-52). The two volumes are downloadable via liberius.net

wanted nothing to do with him during that period].¹⁹²⁾ At the eve of the 1870 Vatican Council the brothers Lémann reflected on the condition of the Jewish 'nation':¹⁹³⁾

«« Since Jewry has made its re-entry into society, the children of Jacob – in order to harmonize themselves with the demands of civil society, and especially in order to take their place in this lifestyle of celebrations and pleasures that they encountered when they left their ghettos – have abandoned, one by one, their traditions, the customs of their fathers, their embarrassing practices. The end result of this has been that, just as initially, after the fall of Jerusalem, Mosaism had degenerated into Talmudism, so now Talmudism itself, with its remnants of Mosaism, is degenerating into rationalism or indifference – that is to say, into nihilism... However, let us remember that in the Synagogue there is still a conservative or orthodox faction. »»

For some reason, at the period, the truly remarkable conversions to Catholicism took place in France and not in Italy or Spain. An astounding conversion is that of Paul-Louis Bernard Drach. At the age of twelve, he entered the first division of a Talmudic school near Strasbourg, place where he was born. This course of study, lasting ordinarily three years, he completed in one year, and then entered the second division where he graduated in only eighteen months. After a thorough study of the Bible, wanting to see whether the Jewish accusations of misinterpretations by the Christians were correct, he accepted Jesus as the promised Messiah. On Holy Saturday 1823, he was baptized by the Arch-

190) The brothers Ratisbonne, Lémann and Libermann, and Drach had no vision of a glorious task for the people of Israel in the Coming Reign (of peace). They submitted to the Roman Catholic view that the Reign of Peace or Millennium Reign, predicted in the Book of Revelation, lied far ahead and was not something to be bothered about, even if taken literally. It is the O.T. that proves that the Millennium is not a metaphor. The only exception, as far as I know, of a convert who in those times believed in the 'new earth', was the Dutch Isaac da Costa, a Sephardic Jew, who embraced Protestantism and was baptized in 1821. Da Costa's home became a meeting place for anyone interested in religion. Sunday after Sunday, people crowded into his side- and living room: the rich and the poor, learned and illiterate. He then gave a simple explanation of a portion of the Old Testament that he illuminated with readings from the New. That's the way it should always have been! An important theme in his many writings was the Millennium in which Israel is to be counted as the first among God's peoples. 'Not-My-people' (Lo-Amni) would then have become 'My-people' (Amni). He wrote: "The Jews did not accept Jesus' scorn on the redemptive Cross, but Christianity rejected his glory, the glory of the theocratic arrangement of David's Son and Lord, established on David's throne.", which is a quote from his preface to the Dutch translation of "The Lord is King" by Lewis Way - Amsterdam # 1850. Following Lewis Way's visit to Russia in 1817, Way developed a belief in the imminent return of Christ, adopting the pseudonym Basilicus for spelling his views in "Thoughts on the Scriptural Expectations of the Christian Church" # 1828.

191) The Catechism of the Catholic Church of 1257 stresses that baptism is absolutely necessary to attain eternal bliss. It adds the important qualification: "God has bound salvation to the sacrament of baptism, yet He himself is not bound by his sacraments." But this qualification was forgotten in course of time. Today's teachings reassess that those who are ignorant of the Gospel but seek to do the will of God in accordance with their understanding of it, can be saved. Vatican II added that, "since Christ died for all, and since all are in fact called to one and the same destiny, which is divine, we must hold that the Holy Spirit offers to all, in a way known to God, the possibility of sharing in the triumph of God's kingdom." (The Church in the Modern World n° 22) See article: "The ongoing debate over Extra Ecclesiam Nulla Salus" by Eric Sammons # May 2021.

192) "Alphonse Ratisbonne – Vie authentique" by René Laurentin - Paris, OEIL # 1986 (T. 1, p. 30 - Le procès: Febr. 18th 1848, n° 29 & 28).

193) "The Lémann Brothers and the Postulatum Pro Hebræis" by Murray Watson (p. 8), who refers to "La question du Messie et le concile du Vatican" by Joseph and Augustin Lémann - Pitrat Aîné, Lyon # 1869 (pp. 126-29).

bishop Mgr de Quélen in the Cathedral of the 'Notre Dame de Paris', that was fully packed and attended by many of the clergy. Thereafter Drach showed an ardent desire to convert Jews to Catholicism while claiming his membership to the Jewish people.¹⁹⁴⁾ The conversion of such a learned man caused an outcry in the Jewish communities all over Europe. After a few years Drach went to Rome, where he was appointed to the important function of librarian of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, which he held until his death. His conversion inspired others to turn to the Christian faith, including the Libermann brothers, who also came from observant orthodox circles; they were baptized in 1824 and 1826 respectively, and one of them became priest.

Marie-Théodore Ratisbonne, ordained priest in 1830, was to become the catechist of the Lémann identical twins some twenty years later. Their simultaneous conversion gave rise to more dust thrown into the air, as they came from observant circles; they knew the Jewish religion inside out. Convinced of the urgent need to support the work of converting their Jewish brethren, the Lémann brothers, who both were ordained priest on the same day in 1860, are known for the abundant publication of learned books and articles aimed at the conversion of the Jewish people, but also at elucidating the Jewish roots of Catholicism to their fellow men in Christ, which, by the way, has been proven useful to me, which can also be said of the writings of Drach. Their defence of Catholicism, based on the Biblical text and the Jewish tradition, is one of the reasons why these authors are neglected in Protestant circles.

The Lémann brothers saw in the ecumenical council of 1870 a unique way to attend to the spiritual hunger of the Jews. From the very outset, Pius IX was a vocal supporter of the Lémanns and their efforts to proselitize the Jews. Patriarch Valerga advised them to contact all of the Council bishops personally, soliciting their endorsement. And so was born the *Postulatum pro Hebræis* (the proposal in favor of the Hebrews). The proposal begins as follows:

«« The undersigned Fathers, in a spirit of humble yet urgent prayer, ask the Holy Vatican Ecumenical Council to deign to address an entirely paternal invitation to the very unfortunate nation of Israel – that is, to express the wish that, finally exhausted by a wait no less vain than long, the Israelites might hasten to acknowledge the Messiah, our Saviour Jesus Christ, truly promised to Abraham and foretold by Moses, 'thus completing and crowning, not changing, the Mosaic religion'. (and further on:) The obstacles that have held them back until now appear to be disappearing more and more, the ancient wall of separation now having fallen [that may have been so, but were both partners ready for it?]. »»

I now quote from Murray Watson's article, already referred to:

«« In just over two months, Joseph and Augustin succeeded beyond their wildest dreams, and they accumulated 510 signatures on their petition to the Council – signatures, they noted, from every country except Poland, whose bishops had been prevented by the Tsar from attending. A total of 510 signatures, just shy of the 518 who had supported the infallibility petition – out of deference, they said, for the authority of the Holy Father. They returned to the Vatican for an audience on March 26, this time bearing the fruits of their labours. According to their account, the Pope said: "*Behold the two Israelite brothers - the two priests - who have such zeal for the salvation of their people! Yes, my children, you are sons of Abraham, ...and I am as well.*" »» (The Lémann Brothers and the *Postulatum*)

194) Unfortunately, Drach choose sides against the Jews during the Damascus blood libel of 1840. (T. 1, p. 79 note b of "De l'harmonie...") This implicated the diplomatic missions in that town, and so the entire European press jumped on it, giving credence to the absurd accusation that blood of Christians was used for the Jewish matzot (unleavened bread), of which I have given an account in "The Damascus Affair".

On July 18 1870 the Papal infallibility dogma was accepted. That very evening, news arrived that war had broken out between France and Prussia, and many of the bishops quickly packed their bags and fled the city. The Postulatum was thus halted in its tracks. For a variety of reasons Vatican I was not reconvened. We had to wait until Vatican II, almost hundred years later, for the Declaration of *Nostra Ætate* that foremost invites the Church not to display antisemitism and recommends mutual understanding and respect and fraternal dialogue, which is quite different from proselitizing. If the Postulatum had been promulgated, it might have helped to peel off a few layers of antisemitism, and as concerns the “*very unfortunate nation of Israel*” the Jews would have felt it as an insult to their dignity to be approached that way. And the work of conversion, to proclaim Jesus as their promised Messiah? Well, that’s a long shot. Nonwithstanding, we should not retract from witnessing that Jesus is the Messiah (Christ is the Greek for Messiah). Classical evangelization, the other extreme, has to be rejected and has proven to be a dead end. Likewise, we should not evangelize the ‘very onfortunate’ Anglicans.

The Congregation of Our Lady of Sion, founded in 1843 by the Ratisbonne twins, having as one of its goals, as its Manual of Superiors teaches: “*the conversion of Israel*”. However, faced with material difficulties, the sisters gradually entrenched themselves in teaching and hospital activity, abandoning their specific apostolate. Even so, it was not without support of the Congregation of Sion that an organized effort to convert Jews developed at the turn of the century, so that in 1905 the Association of Prayers for Israel was inaugurated. The growth of the regional branches of the Association was rapid. The following memberships are listed: 16,000 at the end of 1906, 27,000 at the end of the next quarter, and 33,600 nine months later. A decisive step for the Association’s appeal, was that Pope Pius X himself joined in 1908 and wanted to become their “*first partner*”.

In 1926 the “Amici Israel” (Friends of Israel) was set up in Rome. It was initially dedicated to prayer for the Jews and with a view, not yet clearly defined, of working for their conversion. The founding of the Amici Israel was not the idea of a priest, which is somewhat surprising given that only clergy could join. The Amici Israel was inspired by a Dutch Jewess converted to Catholicism: Sophie van Leer (1892-1953). She had received the blessing for her initiative by Pope Pius XI at a private audience in 1924. In 1928 the association counted 19 cardinals, 278 bishops and 3000 priests in its ranks.

The Amici published the brochure “Pax Super Israel” in January 1928 under Roman imprimatur. It caught the attention of Roman prelates and a few months later the suppression of the Amici was decided upon and the brochure itself was put on the Index (of forbidden books).¹⁹⁵⁾ The motivation for the suppression remained vague. At most, the decree invoked “*the way of acting and thinking*” of the association and presented it as “*contrary to the meaning and the spirit of the Church*”. Father Devaux, Superior of the Congregation of Our Lady of Sion, went to Rome after the promulgation of the decree. He had a meeting with the Holy Father that was attended by Cardinal Merry del Val. Of particular interest is Devaux’s observation that the underlying motiv was that their ideas urged for the exaltation of the Jewish race as such, and this the Church could not accept.

If we look into the brochure itself the reasons become clear. Proceeding from a theology of the sacrament of ordination, according to which a priest acts in persona Christi, the brochure postulated that the Jewish origin and identity of the Saviour creates a special kinship between each member of the clergy and the Jews, because “*Christ is the First-born, the Truth, and the King of Israel*”. In addition to praying for the people of Israel and their conversion, it was recommended that the Church should foster an understand-

195) The 67 page brochure “Pax Super Israel” cannot be found on the Internet, but Hubert Wolf’s book from 2010 discusses it in some detail: “Pope and Devil: the Vatican’s Archives and the Third Reich” (pp. 82 ff.).

ding of the Jewish people and their religion, the history of their relationship with God, and their witness to the faith. Above all, its members should agree to avoid all antisemitic formulations and practices both during religious services and in everyday life. This meant no longer referring to the Jews as the “*people who killed God*”, or to Jerusalem as the “*city of God-killers*”, or proclaiming that the Jews are “*fundamentally unconvertible and unteachable*”. In addition was to be rejected, “*the [so-called] unbelievable things*” of which the Jews stood accused, especially ritual murder and the myth that Jews killed Christian children for religious purpose. They also stressed that the term “*conversion*” should be avoided as being offensive to them; it would be more appropriate to talk about “*the transition from the Kingdom of the Father to the Kingdom of the Son*”. Their ceremonies and religious customs ought to get unprejudiced respect. And most of all, the members of Amici Israel have a special calling to study and meditate on the Old Testament as it forms an integral part of Holy Scripture.

In its unqualified rejection of the brochure and the organization which issued it, the Church could not break free from its previous prejudices, which highlights a certain number of complex considerations of antisemitic sentiments¹⁹⁶⁾ and it puts the finger on the sore spot of a Biblical exegesis that positions the Church instead of the people of Israel, under the pretext of the universal and unifying vocation of the Church. It also boils down to a misunderstanding of the prophecy of the Book of Revelation regarding the Millennium. The admiration of Jewish particularism, which constituted the foundation of the missionary thrust of Amici Israel, thus came to thwart the vocation of the Church. As the Lémann brothers already told, the conversion of a Jew crowns his religion and refers to the notion of fulfillment. That Christianity is the crowning of Judaism ultimately means that Christianity, in a fraternal bond, is the prolongement of Judaism. And this could not be tolerated. Henceforth, Catholic philosemitic reflection focused more on the means of creating favorable and friendly conditions for the conversion of a Jew than on a real missionary method.

The association was banned in 1928 because its principles were alleged to be incompatible with Roman Catholic doctrine. Since then a great deal has changed. It was precisely Romans 11:29 – “*yet they remain God’s friends*” – that Pope John-Paul II used in his historic meeting in Mainz with the German Rabbinic Conference on 17th November 1980 to indicate that the principle of “*the people of God of the Old [Sinaitic] Covenant that was never revoked*” constitutes the basis for the dialogue between the two current parties. As it were, a covenant-partnership was entered into. By placing the emphasis on the ‘current’ partners in this dialogue, the Pope in a sense wished to say: ‘It is not fitting in our time to speak of past crimes’. “*This approach to the Jewish people*”, said the Pope during the meeting, “*also constitutes the basis for the dialogue within the Church on the two parts of the Bible.*” This represents a remarkable point of view since the Old Testament books had until then always been the subject of neglect within Catholicism. The Pope repeated his views later in a variety of ways, so that his wish for such an approach gained more weight.

The Pope stated that the covenant with Israel had never been revoked, without thereby giving a theological motive for saying so – not even on subsequent occasions. The invitation to engage at greater depth in the dialogue between Old and New Testament can be seen as an invitation to explore this issue and that encouraged me to continue my

196) We all fall short of the glory of God. And so the Jews (not always their religion) have had their part in the attack on Christian values – through the press, the political bodies and pernicious philosophies such as communism. Some bitterness on the part of the Roman Church is understandable. The superior talents of their people are bringing a disproportionate number of Jews to the top of organizations; talents are like a sharp knives, not always used beneficially.

road. The opinion that the covenant with Israel has never been revoked is not all that obvious and is, as far as I am aware of, new within Christian thought, expressed at that high level.

In the past, Christian theology insisted time and time again on accusing the Jews of deicide. Hence the Pope's insistence on the 'current' partners in the dialogue. Incidentally, the age-old accusation was neither here nor there. True, the perpetrators could have known that Jesus was a great prophet, but in no way could they have known that He was God, since the Bible states: "*Had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.*" (1 Cor. 2:8) Jesus is God. That is what we believe. But since his murderers did not know, could not have known, neither they nor their descendants can be blamed as deicides. Indeed, even the accusation that the Jews were accessories to the killing of 'a prophet' may no longer be made since we now are living in the time according to Jeremiah 31:29 that "*they shall say no more that he fathers have eaten sour grapes, and that [because of that] their children's teeth are set on edge.*"

27.129 – Today's Christian Zionism: a Covenant Partnership

After Jeremiah 31:29 it says that a new covenant will be made, not according to the covenant which they broke when they danced before the golden calf and that was renewed at the subsequent Yom Kippur (Great Day of Atonement). There will be a different kind of renewal of the covenant that, according to verse 33, will be like a law written on everyone's heart. But that has not materialized in our time, not even among Christians! In the coming days, so it continues, nobody shall have to confront another with: "*Learn how to know Jahwe*". Jeremiah 31:33 reads in full: "*This is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord. I will put my laws within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.*" This refers to the prophecy of his contemporary Ezekiel: "*I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.*" (Ez. 36:26)

The first book of the Bible says: "*Every intent of the thoughts of man's heart was only evil continually.*" And also: "*The intent of man's heart is evil from his youth.*" (Gen. 6:5, 8:21) The prophet Jeremiah says: "*The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; who can understand it?*" (Jer. 17:9) If this is the state of the human condition, how can we ever hope to change it? It's impossible. How can we have pure hearts? "*Who can say, I have cleansed my heart, I am pure from my sin?*" (Prov. 20:9) In spite of all, God gave a solid promise that He will change our hearts from within, which is a boundless miracle. This is the part of the New Covenant that we still look forward to, which of course would be impossible without Jesus' all-embracing sacrifice. The conditions of the renewed covenant have already been fulfilled, but the covenant still awaits its complete elaboration.

A new covenant, and yet the Pope said the old one has never been replaced. If there is no replacement, then how is the controversy with Jeremiah 31:32 and Hebrews 8:13 to be resolved, declaring the first covenant obsolete? The solution can be sought in the special construction of the Sinaitic covenant (the Old Covenant). The Sinaitic code is divided into four parts: the statutes, the judgments, the ordinances, and the spiritual leadership. The ordinances are the laws governing every stage of human activity in the religious, moral, social, economic and political spheres. The legal judgments are the deployments in special cases, the precedents. And then there are the ordinances. These deal with the liturgical aspects, the construction and furnishing of the tabernacle, the vestments and functions of the priestly class, the feasts, the fasts and the various sacrificial services.

One can hardly continue to insist that the Christian dispensation has replaced the ordinances and the legal judgements, except for the fact that they are less stringent when applied to the goyim (the non-Jews). The regulations are another matter: in Christ's sacrifice on the Cross they have found their final destination, of which they were the advance image, and that sacrifice on the Cross has found its uninterrupted expression in the sacrifice of the Holy Mass. In this sense we can speak of obsolescence. Here it is clearly an intervention, even more: an incision – if only it were the transfer of the priesthood from the tribe of Levi to that of Judah, since the new high priest Jesus is of the House of Judah. These two aspects are 'renewed'. And yet we must keep in mind that in this whole concept the old Sinaitic covenant retains its significance, inclusive the liturgical festive calendar and its customs. If someone gets an important promotion – in this case Israel, it can happen that his employment contract is revised and a whole new package is signed, while the original contract, as with Israel, is largely retained.

Finally, there is the fourth part of the Sinaitic covenant. This concerns the spiritual leadership who, according to Leviticus 10:10, should distinguish between holy and unholy, between clean and unclean, and teach the people accordingly. This is also known as the Tenth Commandment, still carried out in Orthodox Judaism today. Christianity already distanced itself as from the beginning of the Old Testament rules, which centered around the point of friction of 'circumcision or not', which at the time was introduced by the Sinaitic covenant.

According to the Jewish tradition, there are not just ten commandments but 613 (excluding the Decalogue), referred to as Taryag. It is generally assumed that the Written Law and its interpretative tradition are but an amplification of the Ten Commandments. According to Deuteronomy 17:19 a king is obligated to carry a Torah scroll at all times. But how could he continually drag around a heavy Torah scroll? Jewish Bible scholars of the 12th century explained: *"There was written on the king's scroll only the Ten Commandments. But since there are in it 613 letters, from the first words "I am" until the last words "thy neighbour", it is to be considered a complete Torah scroll, for this number represents the Taryag."*

The way the Ten Commandments should be numbered is uncertain and has always been a subject of controversy. Indeed they are ten because Deuteronomy 10:4 says: *"And the Lord wrote on the new tables, according to the first writing, the Ten Commandments, which He spake unto you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly."* Yet, strictly spoken, there are only nine, since the first two belong together and thus constitute a single commandment: *"I am the Lord your God; You shall love Me and have no other gods before Me"*. This lack of clarity has given rise to confusion.¹⁹⁷⁾ The Samaritan sect, for instance, saw the assignment to proclaim the Ten Commandments on Mount Gerizim as the tenth commandment. (Deut. 11:27-29) A usual explanation is that in the one breath when *"God spoke «all» these words"* (Ex. 20:1) all the possible words of command are contained, and therefore all possible future developments ever since, on the condition that they are confirmed by the competent authority. (Mt. 16:18-

197) This division in two of the first commandment is according to the Jewish way of counting, because the Catholic Faith counts them as one: "I am the Lord your God (who has taken you out of the land of Egypt); You shall not have other gods besides Me", but it counts the tenth commandment as two. The tenth is according to the Jewish tradition: "You shall not covet anything that belongs to your neighbour." - for the Roman Catholics een ninth and a tenth commandment: "You shall not covet impurity" and "You shall not covet your neighbour's goods". The Protestants do it differently. They omit the first Jewish commandment: "I am the Lord your God who has taken you out of the land of Egypt" and divide the second Jewish commandment in a first and a second one: "no other gods" and "no graven images". For the other commandments, the Protestants follow the Jewish way of counting.

19) Hence all the additional rules would be the first – or, if you will – the tenth commandment. Parallel to this, we can also consider the extensive corpus of purity laws in the Old Testament as representing the missing commandment, that is to say: that these must be examined in greater depth by the priestly leadership as to their theological and moral implications, thereby meeting the ever-changing social circumstances. This ongoing process is called the Oral Law. (Lev. 10:10) The nine commandments are familiar territory to everyone. (Rom. 2:14-15) We know them instinctively, and that also applies to the Sabbath command, which was not yet a fixed rule amongst the primitive peoples. After all, everyone agrees on the desirability of a day of rest now and then and a spiritual resourcing. And so, all over the world the Sunday has been accepted quite naturally – to honor this as the day of God is a different matter. To use the words of the apostle: *“Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful.”* (Rom. 1:21) As concerns the other eight: even a child knows that one should not kill and that lying is ‘naughty’. For the collection of rules included under the last commandment, those are not taken for granted. Uncertainty all around, for this one has not yet been carved into everyone’s hearts.

The Ten Commandments are actually an amplification of the Noachitic commandments (which God gave to Noah). These do not appear in the Bible, but they do in the Talmud. (Sanh. 56a) Because Noah is the father of all peoples, the Jewish tradition regards them as binding for the whole of humanity. According to the Jewish commentary these were already given to Adam before the original sin, and according to me, this must also have been the case with the Ten Commandments. This ‘law’ is the wisdom of God being put in the consciences of the peoples. The “Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church” from 2004 (n° 22) stresses the connection between the Ten Commandments and the natural law. The headline in L’Osservatore Romano, on occasion the 2007 International Congress on Natural Moral Law, reads as follows: *“Lex naturalis reflects lex divina”*. Because inscribed in the consciences, we may say that everyone knows the Commandments by nature. Pope Benedict XVI addressed the Congress: *“In the ethical principles, written in our heart, (...) are expressed unbreakable and contingent norms that do not depend on the will of the legislator and not even on the consensus that the State can and must give. They are, in fact, norms that precede any human law.”* It happened to be differently. Rightly, Paul exclaims (again a quote from Romans 1:21) *“they became vain in their imaginations, and because of it their foolish heart was darkened.”* It therefore became a necessity that God formally laid them down in the constitutional articles of law, as inscribed in the stone tablets.

It shows up that in general lines the seven Noachitic commandments agree with the Ten Commandments. Interestingly, the Talmud stresses that the seventh Noachitic commandment was only added after the Deluge. The seventh gives a mandate to establish courts of law.¹⁹⁸⁾ Here the term of ‘gives a mandate’ because judges – also in our societies – have a mandate from God in whose place he acts. At one time the Supreme Judge will hold a common judge accountable for his verdicts. No small matter! It is therefore better not to want to be judge, as a career choice. Again we notice a duality of 6 + 1, comparable to 9 + 1. The additional command embraces in both cases the interpretative part, and not only interpretative, because the Noachitic courts, as it also functioned under the Levitic priesthood, could hand out punishments like flogging and imprisonment.

198) Because the type of ‘court of justice’ of the 7th Noachitic commandment is also legislative, the term also includes the Parliaments in our modern societies. I like to point out that the total separation of the judicial system from the legislative is a seven-headed Hydra, for this may lead to the situation in which the judiciary distantiates itself from the legislative power, because the absolute impartiality of the judiciary is not guaranteed, is even an illusion.

The essential question is why a legal system can be put into question as to its normative values. Why can we object to unjust laws and oppose a reign of oppression and moral decay? Are laws universal, or just whims of the time, just because people want it that way? In his opening address on February 12, 2007, on occasion of the congress on natural law, Pope Benedict XVI said: *“Natural law is, definitively, the only valid bulwark against the arbitrary power or the deception of ideological manipulation. The knowledge of this law inscribed on the hearts of men increases with the progress of the moral conscience.”* The latter distinction between the natural law and man-made laws is found in Jacques Maritain’s thoughts on natural law.¹⁹⁹⁾ The Pope understood that a more clear understanding of natural law can occur with reflection and experience. He rightly says that it is a *“duty”* of those with *“public responsibility”* to stimulate this progress. We are supposed to learn more and more about what is right, about what and who we are. We are not left isolated when new problems arise, because natural law exists to confront those problems. With a striking logic, Benedict continued: *“Therefore, no law made by man can override the norm written by the Creator without society becoming dramatically wounded in what constitutes its basic foundations.”* We know that many laws made by man, in blatant contradiction, seek to ‘override’ the norm written by the Creator. Benedict told us that in such case society can become *“dramatically wounded”*. And that has indeed happened.

27.130 – The Connection between the Written and Oral Tradition

To better understand what is meant by *“the law written on our hearts”* we should learn about the connection between the written and oral tradition. The notion of the Written Law is about the Holy Script, more in particular its first five books, known as the Torah, that consists of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. In view of the historic relationship of the written and oral law, the borderline between the two currents is not as distinct as often thought. The teachings known to the patriarchs – Noah, Abraham, Joseph, and others – were recognized as an inspiration from God and treated on the same level as Holy Scripture today, at a time when Scripture did not yet exist. Later on came the Oral Law, which goes back to Moses, the last of the patriarchs, which served to explain and expand the Written Law (the Torah). During his forty days’ stay on Mount Horeb, Moses was instructed by God. The saying goes that there on the mountain he received the double law. The Son, ‘Bar’ in Hebrew, descended into the blazing fire of Mount Sinai to instruct Moses. Bar also means to explain. In Deuteronomy 1:5 Moses ‘explains’ (bar) the Law/Torah. Is not the Son the essential subject of the Law, He who is the Word and fulfilment of the Law? When one realizes it was Jesus

199) The French Catholic Jacques Maritain (1882-1973) gave six lectures on the topic of Man and the State. These lectures were given from 5 to 13 December 1949 at the University of Chicago, under the auspices of the Charles R. Walgreen Foundation. The lectures were published in “Man and the State” in 1951 (L’Homme et l’État - in 1953), that was augmented by a study on the concept of sovereignty (ch. 2). It appears that Maritain is not critical of the state as an institute but of the fact that the state has made itself the absolute sovereign of the corpus politique, or the society. In doing so, it has turned upside down the relationship between human beings and the state, making the former just tools at the service of the latter. This happened, according to Maritain, during the French Revolution when power shifted from the King to the Nation and the Nation was seen as a superior person called the Nation State. Maritain was one of the leading neo-Thomists who departed from the idea that Man has a natural and supernatural destiny. Maritain was a strong defender of a natural law ethics. Of central importance, is his argument that the self-evident human rights are rooted in the natural law. This was key to his involvement in the drafting of the UN’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights. However, every right has a duty as its counterpart, which must be in balance in order to prevent disruptions.

himself who gave the Torah to Moses, one can easily accept that in the New Testament, Jesus provides a 'new key' to the Jewish people as to how to remain Torah observant.

The Oral Law has always been considered a vital element, which is also true under the new dispensation in which we now live. Just read the early Church Father Irenaeus of Lyons (ca 140 – ca 202). He was (after Paul) the first great theologian of the Christian church. The apostolic tradition regarding Irenaeus is of great importance to safeguard against a too liberal interpretation of the Script. Without the twofoldness of the Oral and Written Law, the prophetic testimony cannot be properly understood, even for such simple things as the "*binding of words*" (tefillin), prescribed in Deuteronomy 6:5-8. Likewise the forty days, during which Jesus instructed his disciples after his resurrection, served as an Oral Law that was to function as the precursor of the Roman Catholic tradition, offering an explanation of the Bible, an explanation granted to us by God. They call the Oral Law 'law', not because it would always have been transmitted orally, but to indicate that both laws are mutually dependent on each other and that its reflection or elaboration does not clash with the Written Law.

One of the most telling arguments for the necessity of the Oral Law is the tradition for the correct reading of the Holy Script. The protoscript of the Old Testament was originally written without any vowels and spaces. In such a case many readings are possible, depending on which vowels to apply and where to separate the words. The Masoretic tradition for the application of vowels narrows the number of meanings of the text. It happens that all Christian translators of the Bible have relied on this entrenched tradition. Without it there would have been a chaos of translations and interpretation. To give an example of what is possible, just look at the first verse of Genesis 2: "*Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished.*" A possible alternative reads: "Thus 'they' were destroyed." It is evident that without the Oral Tradition it would be impossible to arrive at a proper understanding of the 'Word of God'. But still problems of interpretation remain and therefore we need an authority to lead us.

The Greek word for oral instruction is *akroamaticos*, a word derived from the verb 'to listen'. An enlightening correspondence exists between Aristotle and one of his pupils (probably the later Alexander the Great), that is illustrative for the Jewish way of thinking: "*Know that my published acroamatic lessons can be understood as having never been published, because they can only be understood by them who have heard them explain.*" The Jewish Oral Law was known at the time as Masorete, which concerns the practice of handing down from memory from one generation to another. That should have functioned for certain period in that form, but not as extreme as generally believed. Now everything falls under Masora: the written word, customs, history. According to Masora, Hebrew is bound and unfolding by adding to an existing core – always keeping faithful to the old tradition and expanding it each time with deeper insights. This means that the old tradition is as valid as later developments and provides a good test for new insights. Therefore I listen to what the Jews have to say, trying to graft my findings in theirs. The problem is that this old knowledge has not come down to us undamaged. Unfortunately much has been lost along the way and many additions have been made that have nothing to do with the original rabbinic tradition or inspired knowledge, a reproach that can equally be made against the Roman Catholic Church,²⁰⁰ although the dogmatic constitutions are always correct. The basic assumption holds that the Bible is not suited to a self-opiniated interpretation (2 Peter 1:20) and may only be approached in faith and with awe. And even then! We eagerly look forward to the law that will be inscribed into our hearts.

It will be quite clear that the promise contained in Jeremiah 31:33, made first to Israel for whom the prophecy was intended, and then the rest, still awaits fulfilment, for it says: "*I will put My law in their minds, and inscribe it in their hearts.*" See also Isaiah 59:21:

“As for Me, says the Lord, this is my covenant with them: my Spirit who is upon you and my words which I have put in your mouth, shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your descendants, nor from the mouth of your descendants’ descendants, says the Lord, from this time and forevermore.” Since the founding of the State of Israel in 1948 this is on the horizon. Land ho! Now more than ever do we need moral and theological leadership. The world is like a drunken man. Wisdom is in short supply. In this it is not fitting that we should wish to teach the Jews a lesson. Since over Christianity as well, with us, a veil has been drawn. (1 Cor. 13:12)

27.131 – Papal Infallibility a Foretaste of Something Greater

The moral and theological leadership of the Roman Catholic Church, with a pope at its head, followed in the footsteps of the Jewish high priestly service. Papal infallibility, which applies only to one person, is in fact a foretaste of the law that will later be inscribed in everyone’s heart. It is therefore no more than logical that the Vicar of Christ on earth should be gifted with infallibility in matters concerning faith and morals. As Cardinal Ratzinger, later Pope Benedict XVI, said in a speech on the renewal of moral theology: *“The originality of Holy Scripture in the moral field does not consist of the exclusivity of the rules proposed but in the [applied] refinement and capacity for making distinctions [within] a process of maturing linked to all that has taken shape within the surrounding culture.”* ²⁰¹⁾

A splendid example of the moral leadership of the papacy was offered during the 2006 Good Friday prayers offered by Pope Benedict XVI, published in Zenit on April 11th, which contained a blistering attack on the “*satanic*” mores of our society. The Pope prayed for society to be cleansed of the “*filth*” that surrounds it and to be restored to purity, freed from “*decadent narcissism*”. Particular condemnation was reserved for scientific advances in the field of genetic manipulation: “*Surely God is deeply pained*

200) The arch-deceiver is not only the deceiver of the whole unregenerate world, but of the children of God also; with this difference, that in the deception he seeks to practise upon the saints, he changes his tactics, and works with acutest strategy, in wiles of error, and deception concerning the things of God. (Mt. 24:24; 2 Cor. 11:3, 13-15) (...) The peril concerns every child of God [and every religious movement], and no spiritual believer dare say he is exempt from peril [though, perhaps, Thomas Aquinas was exempt from it]. (...) The essence of deception is that the operation is looked upon as sincere and pure. (...) Those who can be the victims of this are the spiritual children of God; who are not to be beguiled by the world or the flesh, but who are open to all they can learn of ‘spiritual’ things, with sincere longing to be more ‘spiritual’ and more advanced in the knowledge of God. (...) The demonic deceiver, by [treacherously] mixing his ‘teachings’ with the [flawed] reasoning of a person [who out of weakness gives God insufficient credit and misunderstands his incomprehensible love for all individually], that he may come to think that indeed they are his own conclusions, [and thus the malicious intent of the evil one is carried out]. The teachings of the deceiving spirits in this form are so natural in appearance that they seem to come from the man himself, as the fruit of his own mind and reasoning. They counterfeit the working of the human brain, and inject thoughts and suggestions into the human mind; for these deceivers can directly communicate with the mind, apart from gaining possession (in any degree) of the mind or body. Those who are thus deceived, believe that they have reached their own conclusions, by their own reasonings, ignorant that the deceiving spirits have incited them to ‘reason’ without sufficient data, or on a wrong premise, and thus come to false conclusions. (...) Good persons be deceived, and Satan needs good persons [and great teachers] to float his lies under the guise of truth, [and even the Roman Church of old was not exempt from it for a certain category of teaching, though it has always claimed the contrary]. (“War on the Saints” by Jessie Penn-Lewis # 1912; Ch. 1, pp. 6, 8-9.)

by the attack on the family. Today we seem to be witnessing a kind of anti-Genesis, a counter-plan, of a diabolical pride aimed at eliminating the family. There is a move to reinvent humankind, to modify the very grammar of life as planned and willed by God. But, to take God's place, without being God, is insane arrogance, a risky and dangerous venture. May Christ's fall open our eyes to see once more the beautiful face, the true face, the holy face of the family. The face of the family which all of us need." At the Third Station of the Cross, where Jesus falls for the first time, Archbishop Comastri had written: *"Lord, we have lost our sense of sin. Today a slick campaign of propaganda is spreading an insane apologia of evil, a senseless cult of Satan, a mindless desire for transgression, a dishonest and frivolous freedom, exalting impulsiveness, immorality and selfishness as if they were new heights of sophistication."* At the Fourth Station, where Jesus is helped by Simon the Cyrene to carry the cross, Pope Benedict and his followers prayed: *"Lord Jesus, our affluence is making us less human, our entertainment has become a drug, a source of alienation, and our society's incessant, tedious message is an invitation to die of selfishness."* There was a moving meditation for the Eighth Station, where Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem, describing the *"river of tears shed by mothers, mothers of the crucified, mothers of murderers, mothers of drug addicts, mothers of terrorists, mothers of rapists, mothers of psychopaths, but mothers all the same"*. The Pope confronted the question of evil in the world in a meditation that asks: *"Where is Jesus in the agony of our own time, in the division of our world into belts of prosperity and belts of poverty (...) in one room they are concerned about obesity, in the other, they are begging for charity?"*

27.132 – Despite Myself

By way of conclusion we can state that the old Sinaitic Covenant has never been revoked. But it is close to obsolescence in awaiting the coming Reign of Peace. The Christian Zionists are those who believe that God's plan for the world lies hidden in the covenants with Israel, not the covenant with Abraham alone but also that – as now appears – made on Mount Sinai. Today's Jewry is not a relic from a dark age that as far as theology is concerned has had its day. The Jews are to be the leader-people under the salvatory destination that the world is rushing towards, according to the word of the Prophet Isaiah: (Is. 49:6, 46:13, 49:23)

«« It is too small a thing that you should be my servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved ones of Israel: I will also give you as a light to the Gentiles, that you should be my salvation to the ends of the earth. (And furthermore:) I will place salvation in Zion, for Israel my glory. (...) Kings shall bow down to you with their faces to the earth, and lick up the dust of your feet. »»

But some will say: "Just look at how Israel is misbehaving; it is ridiculous to quote these texts". And my response: "Listen to this word": (Zech. 8:13, Jes. 48:8-11)

«« People of Judah and Israel, as you were a curse among the nations, so will I save you, and you shall be a blessing. (...) I knew that Israel would deal very treacherously. You are called a transgressor from the womb. I have tested you in the furnace of affliction. For my own sake, for my own sake, I will do it. For how should my Glory be profaned? And I shall not give to another. »»



201) Quoted in "The Bible and Morality; Biblical Roots of Christian Conduct" of the Pontifical Biblical Commission # 2009. The quote is translated from the German document.

APPENDIX 19

• A Counterweight to Anti-Zionist Views

Comments on the brochure “Irrevocably Connected”

By Hubert Luns

Profetisch Perspectief, winter 2011

Brochure published by the ‘Israëlberaad’ (Israel Discussion Panel) with representatives from eleven Evangelical and Dutch Reformed organizations in the Netherlands, intended as a counterweight to anti-Zionist views and policy notes within the Protestant churches, in particular as concerns the Kairos document and the IP note.

Presented on September 6 to the Supreme Council of the Synod of the Protestant Church, which in their comments were not favorably disposed, because being kind to Israel, the State of Israel, is frowned upon.

Earlier in 2011 a similar document was issued by the Dutch Reformed Association. This brochure appears to be a welcome addition to that. As concerns the reactions, I have decided to limit myself to the theological foundation, which, according to a number of critics, would rattle on all sides.

Dr. Arjan Plaisier, the scribe of the Protestant Church in the Netherlands (PKN), refers to Stephen’s speech to reinforce his argument of the so-called wrongly directed Christology of the authors. Stephen hammers on the anvil of stubbornness and blindness of the Jewish people. Has Dr. Plaisier then never heard of Isaiah 29:18 in which the blindness predicted in verse 10 is lifted? Does not Dr. Plaisier know of the spiritual revival that is now taking place in Israel which, for instance, became evident during the Gaza War that raged in January 2009? In that war a great number of soldiers demonstrated a huge spiritual hunger. Or is saying such a thing to the PKN like cursing in the church? Not only did they wish to be prayed for but they also prayed themselves. Emergency tents on enemy territory serving as synagogues and had no fewer than ten morning prayer services. It is said that soldiers who had never before attended a prayer meeting now prayed along with the rest wearing their tefillin (prayer belts). Is that also a wrong Christology? Dr. Plaisier departs from the correct fact that salvation in Christ is for everyone and that all in Christ are equal. But in the priority of grace there is nevertheless a sequentiality, a phased implementation of God’s plans, and the authors of the brochure have tried to make that clear. And because not everyone can be head, and not everyone hand, here too – but then among the nations – there is a division of tasks, one from which the Jewish people cannot desist, even if they wanted to. Wishful thinking? The solid basis of the authors is that old book, supplemented with texts, from Paul in particular. It is not only the ‘Apocalypse’ that counts, Mr Plaisier! By the way, the sealed 144,000



from Revelation 7 are from all the tribes of the children of Israel, and it is only after that, the book says, that the great tribulation begins. Maybe we have already entered the tribulation. Who knows?

The brochure, which I have read with great pleasure, reveals that the discussions that led to the preparation of this brochure have been a fruitful learning process for all participants. That learning process is not over yet. A deepening of our understanding of what the various covenants with Israel entail, and which facets of the New Testament really mean a renewal, is in place. If someone gets an important promotion, in this case Israel, an entirely new package can be signed, while the original contract is largely retained. A deepening is also required with regard to the complicated relationship between the Jews and Christians from the early days of the Church, as well as between the ordinary Jews and the sect of the Judeo-Christians, those converted Jews who remained in Judaism and who in the much later Talmud are referred to as the 'minim', that is, the separated ones or apostates. There is certainly no schism in this complexity. A schism presumes the tearing apart of two living parts. But it is God himself who, as a punishment, albeit a temporary one, broke off the old and dead branches. (Rom. 11: 8-9) The Jews of the stubbornness were then driven out and sent to the courtyard, and temporarily denied access to the innermost sanctuary of the Temple.



A Roman Spring for the Jews?



The Vatican, photo by Binh Nguyen Thai

Serious steps were taken toward Judaism during the Second Vatican Council. But at the same time, we saw strong counter forces emerge within the Church, because theologically one does not know quite how to deal with the current place of Judaism in God's plan with the world. Quite logical, since Roman Catholics have no end-time vision with a revival of the land and people of Israel, except for the image that one day everything will come to an end with the terrifying 'Last Judgment'. And until that time, they think, there must be preaching and God's Kingdom - with the Roman Catholic Church in the lead - must be shaped as much as possible, albeit limitatively. Catholics are in fact a-millennialists and their homeland is not here, but in Heaven. That has become part of the instinctive condition of the Roman Catholic believer through centuries of education. During World War II, the Holy Office interpreted the prevailing opinion "that premillennialism cannot safely be taught, though the Church has not dogmatically defined this issue."²⁰²⁾ Freely translated: we don't know what to make of it, but it's not really important. So never mind. It is this tension of 'yes, we are seeking rapprochement with Judaism' and 'no, what should we do with it?' that will be scrutinized.

28.133 – Supported by One Root (Romans 11:16)

Such was the name of a 1995 pastoral letter from the Dutch bishops to their faithful, thirty years after the promulgation of "Nostra Aetate" (in our time), a document dealing with the relationship of the Roman Catholic Church to Judaism, which, according to

202) The Supreme Sacred Congregation of the 'Holy Office' is the old name for the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Pronouncement of July 1944, referred to in "Enchiridion Symbolorum: Definitionum et Declarationum de Rebus Fidei et Morum" by Henricus Denzinger - Adolfus Schönmetzer, Freiburg # 36th revised ed. 1976 (p. 759). Taken from note 1 of the article by Michael J. Svigel from 2001 (Th.M., Ph.D. student – Dallas Seminary): "The Phantom Heresy: Did the Council of Ephesus (431) Condemn Chiliasm?"

Rabbi David Rosen, ushered in a true transformation in the attitude of the Catholic Church and also had profound implications for its theology.²⁰³⁾ The most remarkable statement of Nostra Aetate was that Jesus' crucifixion "*cannot be charged against all the Jews, without distinction, then alive, nor against the Jews of today.*" Here is a quote from that letter:

«« For Christians, the Jewish religion has an essential and permanent meaning. This fundamental insight was formally articulated thirty years ago, on Oct. 28, 1965, by the Second Vatican Council in the declaration Nostra Aetate. It showed that the Church cannot understand itself correctly when it ignores its relationship to Judaism.

Nostra Aetate stimulated a continuous development in the relationship between the Roman Catholic Church and Judaism. One of the ways in which this is expressed is in the Holy Sees official recognition of the State of Israel and the establishment of reciprocal diplomatic relations. On that occasion the Roman Catholic Church expressly defined the obligation to combat every form of anti-Semitism. Consistent with this development is the honest reflection on their own history that recently led the Polish and German bishops to recognize our joint responsibility for the persecution of the Jews in the past. In all sincerity we join them in this sentiment.

Just as we are filled with gratitude this year when we recall the end of the War 50 years ago, we are filled with shame and dismay when we recall the 'Shoah' (the mass murder of the Jews). (...) From our country the second highest percentage of Jews was deported and murdered. This thought holds us in its grasp. (...) A tradition of theological and ecclesiastical anti-Judaism contributed to the climate that made the Shoah possible. What was known as the 'catechesis of vilification' taught that Jewry after Christ's death was rejected as a people. Partly because of such traditions, even in our country, Catholics sometimes distanced themselves from Jews, were sometimes indifferent or ill-disposed. Immediately after the war this was apparent on the return of those who had been hidden from or who had survived the death camps [who were not granted their former homes]. We reject this tradition of ecclesial anti-Judaism and deplore its horrible consequences. With our Pope and with other episcopal conferences, we condemn every form of anti-Semitism as a sin against God and humanity.

(...) Already in 1951 the Katholieke Raad voor Israel (Catholic Council for Israel) was established in the Netherlands with the purpose of strengthening in our Church the awareness of the significance of Judaism and improving our relations. Last year (that is, in 1994) we gave this Council official status as an independent ecclesiastical institution. (...) Since 1981, the dialogue between the Christian Churches and Judaism in the Netherlands has taken firm shape in the "Consultative Organization for Jews and Christians" in the Netherlands.²⁰⁴⁾ Our church participates in this consultation through the Catholic Council for Israel. »»

That the attempt at recovery was not a local phenomenon, but also lived in Rome, appears from the fact that Pope John XXIII, shortly after in 1958 he had been elected Pope, deleted from the Eastern liturgy the "*Oremus pro perfidis judaeis, non flectant genua*", meaning: "*Let us pray for the perfidious Jews, do not genuflect!*" And in 1993, on the 50th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, Pope John Paul II issued this

203) From a speech given by David Rosen in Rome on Oct. 27, 2005, entitled: "Nostra Aetate, Forty Years After Vatican II – Present & Future Perspectives", during the conference of the Holy See Commission for Religious Relations with Jewry, Rome, October 27, 2005. Due to its importance, Rabbi David Rosen's speech was shown on the Vatican website.

204) www.OJEC.org

appeal: *“As Christians and Jews, following the example of the faith of Abraham, we are called to be a blessing to the world. This is the common task awaiting us. It is therefore necessary for us, Christians and Jews, to be first a blessing to one another!”* ²⁰⁵⁾

The exhortation of the Dutch bishops ends with a reflection on the roots of Christianity with a reference to Romans 11, which speaks of the Jewish root on which Christianity is grafted. But it ignores what that might mean for the place of the Jewish people in the world yet to come, where it will no longer be Jew or Christian, but Jew AND Christian, who will then have become full partners of each other, though not quite, for if we take the Old Testament seriously, primacy will go to the Jews. (Zech. 14:18) After all, in the same verse from Romans, it also says that God is able to re-graft the broken away branches of Judaism among the later shoots of Christianity. A prophecy perhaps for our time, as the twigs on the fig tree, image of Israel, ²⁰⁶⁾ are starting to shoot out! (Mt. 24:32)

28.134 – The seeking of brotherhood

Pope John Paul II has often expressed a sincere desire to improve relations with the Jewish people, and he has deployed important initiatives to that effect. And thus, in 1997, a public announcement was made that guilt would be admitted regarding anti-Semitism within the Roman Church in the past, which indeed happened in the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000. A first step in that direction was the organising of a general Christian and private symposium under the auspices of the Vatican, around the theme of “The Roots of the Anti-Jewish Attitude in the Christian World”. A significant step was set during the Mass celebrated at the closing of the symposium, when the Australian Cardinal Edward Cassidy asked God forgiveness for sins against the Jews, praying: *“Christians will acknowledge the sins committed by not a few of their number against the people of the Covenant.”* - whereupon the Pope movingly answered: *“God of our fathers, You have chosen Abraham and his descendants to bring your name to the nations: we are deeply saddened by the behaviour of those who in the course of history have caused these children of yours to suffer, and asking your forgiveness we wish to commit ourselves to genuine brotherhood with the people of the Book.”*, prayer that he pushed in between the stones of the Wailing Wall when, a few days later, he made his historic tour in Israel.

Finally, in March 2011, the Pope who succeeded John Paul II, made an exoneration of the Jewish people for the death of Jesus Christ, tackling one of the most controversial issues in Christianity in his new book “Jesus of Nazareth-Part II”, namely the passage of Jesus’ court session, according to Matthew 27 (in paraphrase):

«« When Pilate saw that the uproar only increased, he washed his hands in the sight of everyone in token of innocence, saying: *“I am innocent of the blood of this righteous one! The fault lies with you!”* [Nonetheless, Pilate remained the unjust judge.] Upon this all the assembled people cried: *“His blood come upon us and our posterity!”* »»

This was the last serious attempt at rapprochement by this Pope, who as we know had to resign under controversial circumstances. ²⁰⁷⁾ Based on this passage the Pope tried to explain biblically and theologically why there would be no basis in Scripture for the argument that the Jewish people as a whole were responsible for Jesus’ death. Debut-

205) L’Osservatore Romano, Aug. 17, 1993.

206) The fig tree symbolizes the messianic kingdom of peace. According to the 2007 Encyclopaedia Judaica, it represents an ideal past and the hope of a peaceful future, based on the texts from 1 Kings 4:5 and Micah 4:3-4, in accordance with Joel 2:22-23 where there is mention of the teacher of righteousness: “Then they will forge their swords into plowshares, and war they will learn no more. Everyone will then sit under his vine or under his fig tree and will not be startled by anyone.”

king this passage was seen by the Jews as a praiseworthy initiative,²⁰⁸⁾ although the papal exegesis of safeguarding the Jews from prophet-murder rests on shaky grounds.²⁰⁹⁾ His argument assumes that the Gospel of Matthew was not written until after the persecution of Christians under Nero had begun, that is, some forty years after Christ's death on the Cross. This is an indefensible position. The Pope claimed that the verse in question should be considered in the spirit of the later time it was supposedly recorded. Now that is a theological blunder, especially since the Pope interpreted this statement as a blessing, for he wrote: "*Jesus' Blood speaks of better things than the blood of Abel.*" The intention of the cry, however, was in a different vein! Is it not written that whoever goes to communion unworthily brings judgment upon himself? (1 Cor. 11:27-28) Again, the state of mind and intention are decisive. Unfortunately, Pope Benedict XVI has been caught in the Modernist trap. And even if it had been written down some forty years later, a deviation from what every Christian knew by heart would have been indignantly rejected. It was a curse, period. Blessing and cursing are in alignment with each other, for the Hebrew *bar-ak* means both a blessing and a curse. Bileam the prophet/magician (both the same Hebrew word) was hired by the Ammonites and Moabites to in eternity curse the Israelites, who then, as a young people, had a vulnerable childlike disposition. (Deut. 23:3-7, Num. 22-24) By God's intervention the curse was turned into a blessing, and the sponsors were punished with a taste of their own medicine. This shows that a blessing or curse is something serious that can have repercussions into distant posterity.

The guilty disposition to Jesus' crucifixion is secondary in the matter of Matthew 27, but it does play a part. The primary issue is how the self-cursing came about. And as for the silent majority who were not at the scene? During the ensuing developments, those have not been able to summon the courage to distance themselves from the Jewish leadership, although they had been given ample opportunity to do so. Clearly, many did not want to recognize this Jesus as their messiah, thereby putting themselves and their descendants under the curse, even though they were not at the *gabbatha* (place of judgment). This is similar to soldiers who never question their orders and never want to consider in God's eyes the validity of some extreme orders, but take the easy way out, and even take pride in their corpse obedience. Corpse obedience does not suit a human being God has in mind. The self-cursing of "*his blood come upon us and our children*" was not an empty cry, but was sealed with Christ's Blood. Thereby it gained eternal power, what a horror! It can only be cancelled in antitype blessing and with that same Blood turned into its opposite. To this end serves the proposal of Reverend Leenhouts (see App.), whereby it seems not illogical that in solemn ceremony a God-formed Jewish collegium should call down Jesus' Blood upon themselves and its people, but now with the right intent.

28.135 – The misunderstood dimension of the State of Israel

It is undoubtedly a serious search for rapprochement, but unfortunately I do not read anywhere about the prophetic interpretation of the post-war re-establishment of the State

207) His successor Bergoglio, aka Pope Francis, has taken an increasingly extreme pro-Palestinian position. See for instance John L. Allen Jr.'s Nov. 26, 2023 article in *Crux*, an online newspaper that focuses on news about the Catholic Church, with the heading: "It's impossible to ignore Pope Francis's growing Jewish problem."

208) Elan Steinberg, for instance, the vice president of "The American Gathering of Holocaust Survivors and their Descendants" in a reaction to this book: "Holocaust survivors know only too well how the centurieslong charge of 'Christ killer' against the Jews created a poisonous climate of hate that was the foundation of anti-Semitic persecution whose ultimate expression was realized in the Holocaust."

209) The Jews could not have known then that Jesus was the God-man and therefore they cannot be charged with God-murder, but they can be charged with the murder of a great prophet.

of Israel. Even in Israel itself, to this day there is little understanding of this. Those who only have an eye for the political dimension of the Israeli-Arab conflict will make errors of judgment and allow themselves to be carried away by the whipped up opinions that the news media pour out on us daily, and will also fail to see through the foul play at a high political level, where every concession from Israel is met with unreasonable new demands. This explains why the Vatican has repeatedly supported the creation of a separate Palestinian state within Israel, ignoring what is really at stake.

The curious phenomenon occurs that those who have no eye for the spiritual dimension of the State of Israel also have no eye for the proper political relations. The world became painfully aware of this during Pope Benedict XVI's visit to Israel in May 2009, when at the start of a one-day visit to the West Bank (at the East of Jerusalem), he called for a sovereign Palestinian homeland. *"The Holy See supports the right of your people to a sovereign Palestinian homeland in the land of your forefathers, secure and at peace with its neighbors, within internationally recognized borders"*, said the Pope. This happened, according to the news, *"at the presidential palace of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas in Bethlehem"* – as if already ruling a country!

What is meant by the *"land of your forefathers"* is difficult to fathom, because most Arabs living in Israël, whether or not in the West Bank, are newcomers with a non-Palestinian identity. Many Jews are also newcomers, or rather returnees, who had never given up their own Israeli identity 'in the foreign countries' where they stayed. In their dispersal, they were seen by themselves, and by others, as an oddity, as an intruder who proved unassimilable. It is easy to establish from both a Biblical and historical perspective, that the Jews do have the right to call this land 'the land of their forefathers'. This is unfortunately not the case for the self-proclaimed Palestinians. Which is not to say that they would not have a right to reside as co-residents in the State of Israel, but then they must stop their uninterrupted hate campaign against the Jews and say goodbye to terrorism, because a co-resident should behave properly.

The latest in a series of incidents occurred in 2011, on Friday, June 3, during Mahmoud Abbas' second visit to the Vatican, the successor to Yasser Arafat, widely reported by the Ma'an News Agency. In doing so, it was also his fourth meeting with Pope Benedict. Following the meeting, the Vatican made an urgent plea for a just and lasting peace between Israel and the 'Palestinians', which it said, as expressed earlier, can be brought about only through an independent Palestinian state: *"Soon, the State of Israel and the Palestinian state must live in security, at peace with their neighbors and within internationally recognized borders."* On that day the Holy See Press Office released the following statement:

«« This morning Benedict XVI received in audience Mr. Mahmoud Abbas, president of the Palestinian Authority, who subsequently met with Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, secretary of State, and Archbishop Dominique Mamberti, secretary for Relations with States. A central issue of the cordial conversations was the troubled situation in the Holy Land. Particular stress was laid on the urgent need to find a just and lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, one capable of ensuring respect for the rights of all and, therefore, the attainment of the Palestinian people's legitimate aspirations for an independent State. »»

Despite all these initiatives, it remains guesswork for the Catholic Church of how to integrate the Jews and the 'Book', they are carrying with them, in their theology, even though there is a huge area of tension there. As long as, according to accepted doctrine, the 'coming world' is the trivial extension of the 'old world', the theological knot cannot be untangled. Where is the 'raison d'être' of the State of Israel, in this approach, as the fulfillment of God's promises? In Catholicism, the Millennial Kingdom does not repre-

sent a real expectation, though it is prayed for every time during Holy Mass, but that goes in one ear and out the other, or it is misinterpreted. My humble opinion is that as long as this misguided theology endures, and the Catholic Church is assigned the leadership role in an 'eventual' Reign of Peace – while the prophecies of the Book of Zachariah are swept under the carpet – the State of Israel will be a thorn in the side, not only of politicians, but as well of many Church leaders.

With regard to messianic expectation, there are striking patterns that appear to merge from the Jewish and Christian traditions in the same bed, although at first glance they appear totally different. It is precisely because of a lack of theological understanding that now, many decades after *Nostra Aetate*, most prelates have distanced themselves from this piece. They want to classify it as a library piece that belongs to the immediate post-war period in which the Church had to come to terms with the horrors of the Shoah, a period that lies now far behind and therefore seems to be a thing of the past. That may sound logical but it is incorrect.

Bear in mind that the contracting parties in the New and Old Testaments remained the same, namely God and the Houses of Israel. (Heb. 8:8) The same as at the time with Moses, the Church is now servant of the Covenant as partner in Christ and as such stands in the ministry of reconciliation.²¹⁰⁾ The sacred task of Christendom is the ministry of reconciliation, also as regards this broken world. Jesus Christ is the gate through which all salvation flows, to us and to Judaism, the parties who, according to God's Counsel, are meant to be the dispensers of grace. The restoration of the breach between God and the world, bleeding from innumerable wounds, can only follow the restoration of the breach between God and Judaism, in what is called 'the priority of grace'. This is why the Church's efforts to draw closer to their elder brother are of the utmost importance.

28.136 – The coming Reign of Peace

Let's look at Revelation 20 and see what Philip Schaff says about the expectation of the Millennial Reign. Is it real or imaginary? Revelation 20 presents the end times as a har-binger of the Millennial Reign. Chiliasm, a word derived from the Greek for thousand, is the theology that deals with it. The great historian Philip Schaff writes:²¹¹⁾

«« The most striking point in the eschatology [concerning the end of times] of the ante-Nicene age [therefore, before the year 325] is the prominent Chiliasm or Millennialism, that is the belief of a visible reign of Christ in glory on earth with the risen saints for a thousand years, before the general resurrection and [final] judgment. It was indeed not the doctrine of the church embodied in any creed or form of devotion, but a widely current opinion of distinguished teachers [from the early Church], such as Barnabas, Papias, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Methodius, and Lactantius; while Caius, Origen, Dionysius the Great, Eusebius,²¹²⁾ as afterwards Jerome and Augustin, opposed it. »»

Weary of the long wait and thinking that Roman Emperor Constantine had brought the expected Kingdom on earth, Augustin of Hippo dated the 1000 Years' Reign from the time of the writing of the Book of Revelation, or the beginning of the Christian era, to the end of the first millennium of the Christian church. It was the existential fear of the

210) cf. Hebr. 8:8, 2 Cor. 3:6; 5:18-20 and Eph. 1:22-23; 3:6.

211) "History of the Christian Church - II" by Philip Schaff – Electronic Bible Society # 1882. The 2002 Internet Ed. is based on the 3rd revised Ed. (§158, p. 443).

212) See also with regard to early Christian millennialism, the Italian Bible edition with many exegetical footnotes, the so-called "Collana La Sacra Biblia" - Marietti # 1947-1960 (p. 844), under the direction of Salvatore Garofalo, Professor of Sacred Scripture at the Pontifical Urban University (Pontificia Università Urbaniana).

Last Judgment that subsequently led Augustine to revise his earlier opinion and conceive of the Millennial Kingdom in symbolic terms. He was not the first to think that way, but certainly the most prominent.

Such a fear of God's judgment, which led one to see the Millennial Reign and God's Judgment in a metaphorical sense – so that finally even Hell was no longer taken seriously – could only take root from an insufficient understanding of God's mercy. Only when God has exhausted all means of grace to put man on the right path, only then will God intervene, 'must' God intervene, to prevent worse. The Heavenly Messages to Sister Jozefa Menendez (1890-1923) and those to Sister Faustina (1905-1938) opened the way to the knowledge, worship and supplication of God's infinite mercy. This deepened knowledge could have removed the misplaced fear of God's judgments. Imploring God's mercy leads to averting calamity. After all, prophetically announced upheavals are always conditional. Even at the last, God is ready to withdraw his punishing hand if the Church employs the means of grace assigned to her. How powerful is the prayer that implores God's mercy, how beneficial for the world! The Church has been called God's lightning rod. The Church and her faithful are the salt of the earth, but if the salt has become saltless... Well, then things look really bad.

The symbolic interpretation of the Reign of Peace later became common coin in theology, especially of the Roman Catholic and the Lutheran and their offshoots. A dichotomy thus emerged. Just as the Old Testament is peppered with material promises and Judaism persisted in believing in a material future that was to take shape in the 'world to come', so Christianity since Augustine has focused almost exclusively on a spiritual and Heavenly future, which to a certain extent harmonizes with the New Testament, while the truth lies somewhere in the middle. After all, according to Revelation 21:2, Heaven descends on an earthly stage, thus answering the plea in the Lord's Prayer: "*Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven*", a prayer that so far has remained a beautiful dream. For me it is not just a dream but one of the most beautiful prayers, and each time I pray it, a feeling of great joy overcomes me.

After the 1950s by a strange twist of fate, it became the generally accepted view that the Council of Ephesus from 431 condemned Chiliasm as an heretical and superstitious proposition. Michael Sviel ThM, a Ph.D. (2008) from the Dallas Theological Seminary (DTS), discusses this topic in his paper from 2001, called "The Phantom Heresy". Herein he reviews a number of important authors like Norman Cohn, Robert Clouse, Peter Toon and Andrew Bradstock, to mention a few. Yet, he discovered to his amazement that as to that, the original records show no such condemnation, anathema, decree, or declaration whatsoever. Michael Sviel identifies a methodological problem to which all researchers and writers are prone, as they repeatedly refer to previous authors:

«« The temptation is always great to 'trust' a secondary source when we believe that author to be quoting a primary source accurately, or to have done the right work in the primary sources to authorize a claim, or to simply have enough expertise in a particular area of study to be free from gross inaccuracies. (The paper ends as follows:) One may be tempted to consider whether the proliferation of the unwarranted assertion of an early ecumenical condemnation of Chiliasm is sometimes motivated by a present-day anti-premillennialism that unconsciously wishes the early church had universally condemned Chiliasm after all. Nay, it seems both ancient and contemporary orthodoxy will still need to make room for premillennialists. »»

28.137 – *An odd duck in the crowd*

Without a vision of the future, albeit still vague and undefined, in which the church will stand in a different economy of grace, it is well-nigh impossible to assign the Jews a

fundamentally different place from the one they had before 1917, which is the year the Ottomans, as the Turks were then called, were expelled from Jerusalem.²¹³⁾ Without such a vision of the future, the State of Israel is an odd duck in the crowd. My book of proverbs explains: *"This is what people sometimes call someone who is a stranger in a company or in a certain circle of people."* The suffering inflicted on the Jews throughout history is something else, one thinks; dialogue and recognition of guilt are the solution to this. Admiration may also be expressed for the intellectual achievements of Judaism and their contributions to world culture over millennia of Christianity. Unfortunately, however, this is all, and people insist that an anti the State of Israel policy has nothing, absolutely nothing to do with anti-Semitism or opposition to God's plan for the world.

To illustrate where this can lead, the following. The January issue of "La Civiltà Cattolica" – the most authoritative magazine of the Jesuits, in their January 2011 editorial, managed to apply the Palestinian Nakba term to Palestinian refugees, a term indicating that the establishment of the Jewish state was an unmitigated disaster. The refugee problem was said to be the result of the *"ethnic cleansing that Israel applied at the time"*. The issue of La Civiltà literally adopted the ever repeated Islamic slogan that *"the Zionists were cleverly able to exploit the Western sense of guilt for the Shoah to lay the foundations of their own state."*

Clearly, despite the admirable progress made in rapprochement with Judaism, there is still a difficult road ahead. Beyond the commendable initiatives and a perceptible turn-around in sentiment, the old sentiments of rejection and condemnation continue to play tricks, albeit dressed differently. Only when the desire for fraternization is accompanied by sound theological teaching can the pernicious forces within the Roman Church be silenced, ...and not only within the Roman Church!



213) The ancient rulers had no love for Jerusalem. When the British Expeditionary Force, led by General Allenby, advanced, the Ottoman army units had already left Jerusalem of their own accord with the plan to shoot the holy city in ruins as soon as the adversary established himself there, a plan that could be foiled by the deployment of the airplane - a new weapon then. From above, they strafed the mortar batteries of the Ottomans, who fled in great panic. And so it happened that Jerusalem fell unharmed into the hands of the British.

APPENDIX 20

The Church Fathers on the ‘Intermediate Coming’ of our Lord and Saviour before the inception of the Millennium

St. Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153), in his Sermon 5 of Adventu Domini, clearly speaks of another coming of Christ, which he places between the first in the flesh and the final coming in glory for the Last Judgment. He calls this middle ‘Coming’ the Intermediate Coming. He says: “We know that there are three comings of the Lord. The second one lies in between the other two. It is invisible, while the other two are visible. In the first Coming, He was seen on earth, dwelling among men. (...) In the final one all flesh will see the salvation of our Lord, and they will look upon Him whom they have pierced. The intermediate Coming is a hidden one; in it only the elect will see the Lord within their own selves, and will thus be saved. In his first Coming, our Lord came in the flesh and in our weakness; in this middle one, He is our rest and consolation. In case someone should think that this middle one is sheer invention, listen to what our Lord Himself says: ‘If anyone loves Me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and We will abide in him.’”

St. Justin Martyr (ca 100 - ca 165) said: “For I choose to follow not men or men’s doctrines, but God and the doctrines delivered by Him. For if you have fallen in with some who are called Christians, but who do not admit this truth, and venture to blaspheme the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob, who also say that there is no resurrection of the dead, and that their souls, when they die, are taken to Heaven, do not imagine they are Christians. (...) But I and others, who are right-minded Christians on all points, are assured that there will be a resurrection of the dead, and a thousand years in Jerusalem, which will then be built, adorned, and enlarged, as the prophets Ezekiel and Isaiah and others declare.” (Dialogue with Trypho, Ch. LXXX)

Justin Martyr mentions the era of peace when quoting the prophet Isaiah. Isaiah spoke thus concerning this era of a thousand years: “For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in that what I create; for behold I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and be glad in my people; no more shall be heard in it the sound of weeping and the cry of distress. No more shall there be in it an infant that lives but a few days, or an old man who does not fill out his days, for a centenarian will die in the strength of his life, and those who do not reach one hundred years are considered cursed. They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. Like the days of a tree shall be the days of my people, and my chosen ones shall themselves enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain, or bear children for calamity; for they shall be the offspring of the blessed of the Lord and their children with them. Before they call I will answer, while they are yet speaking I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like the ox; and dust shall be the serpent’s food. They

shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain, says the Lord.” (Is. 65:17-25) (idem, Ch. LXXXI)

Lactantius (also called Lucius Cælius) (ca 250 – ca 325): “God completed the world and this admirable work of nature in the space of six days, as is contained in the mysteries of Holy Scripture, and consecrated it the seventh day, on which He rested from his works. This is the Sabbath-day, which in the language of the Hebrews received its name from the number itself [in reality sabbath is derived from the word ‘to cease’], whence the seventh is the legitimate and complete number.

Therefore, since all the works of God were completed in six days, the world must continue in its present state through six ages, that is, six thousand years. For the great day of the Lord is enclosed by cycles of a thousand years, as the prophet shows, who says: ‘In thy sight, O Lord, a thousand years are as one day.’ And as God laboured during those six days in creating such great works, so his religion and truth must labour during these six thousand years, while wickedness prevails and bears rule. And again, since God, having finished his works, rested the seventh day and blessed it, at the end of the six thousandth year all [human] wickedness must be abolished from the earth, and righteousness reign for a thousand years; and there must be tranquillity and rest from the labours which the world until then endured.” (Divine Institutes, book VII: Of a happy life - Ch. 14)

“We have said, a little before, that it will come to pass at the commencement of the sacred reign, that the prince of the devils will be bound by God. But he also, when the thousand years of the Kingdom, that is, the seventh ‘thousand’ of the world, shall begin to be ended, will be loosed afresh, and being sent forth from prison, he will go forth and assemble all the nations, which shall then be traded against the dominion of the righteous, that they may make war against the Holy City; and there shall be collected together from all the world an innumerable crowd from [all] the nations, and they shall besiege and surround the city.” (idem - Ch. 26)

Papias (ca 60 - ca 130): “As the elders, who had met John the disciple of the Lord, remembered that they had heard from him how the Lord would teach in regard to those times, they foretold: The days will come in which vines shall grow, having each ten thousand branches, and in each branch ten thousand twigs, and in each true twig ten thousand shoots, and in every one of the shoots ten thousand clusters, and on every one of the clusters ten thousand grapes, and every grape when pressed will give five-and-twenty metretes of wine [a metrete is about 40 liters]. And when any one of the saints shall lay hold of a cluster, another shall cry out: ‘I am a better cluster; take me; bless the Lord through me!’ In like manner a grain of wheat will produce ten thousand ears, and every ear would have ten thousand grains, and every grain will yield ten pounds of clear, pure, fine flour. And apples, seeds and grass will yield in similar proportions. All animals, feeding then only on the production of the earth, will become peaceable and harmonious and in perfect subjection to man.”

Testimony is borne to these things in the writings of Papias, an elder, who happened to be a hearer of John the Baptist and a friend of St. Polycarp, the bishop of Smyrna, who was a well known pupil of John the Evangelist. And he added the following

words: “Now these things are credible to believers. And Judas the Traitor, not believing, asked the question: How shall such growths be accomplished by God? Whereupon the Lord answered: ‘They shall see who shall come to them. These, then, are the times mentioned by Isaiah the prophet: And the wolf shall lie, down with the lamb, etc.’” (The Fragments by Papias, Vol. IV, of a total of five.)

St. Irenaeus (ca 130 – ca 202), bishop of Lyons (*Adversus Hæreses*, book V): Irenæus was born in Smyrna. He had listened to the preachings of St. Polycarp, the bishop of Smyrna. Polycarp is traditionally considered a disciple of John the Evangelist. In section 18.86 of this compendium – “Papias and Irenæus about the Kingdom of God”, is a more extensive account of his writings.

Ch. 32:1 : “Inasmuch, therefore, as the opinions of certain [orthodox persons] are derived from heretical discourses, they are both ignorant of God’s dispensations [the periods of God’s creation], and of the mystery of the resurrection of the just, and of the [earthly] Kingdom which is the commencement of incorruption. Under this reign those who shall be worthy are gradually adjusted to partake of the divine nature (capere Deum). It is necessary to tell them that they should respect those things, that it behoves the righteous to receive as the first ones the promise of the inheritance, which God promised to the fathers, and to reign in it after the resurrection and to behold God in this renovated creation – and that the [last] judgement takes place afterwards [when that reign has come to its end].”

Ch. 32:2 : “Thus, then, the promise of God, which He gave to Abraham, remains steadfast. For thus He said: ‘Lift up thine eyes, and look from this place where now thou art, towards the north and south, and east and west. For all the earth which thou seest, I will give to thee and to thy seed, even for ever.’ And again He says: ‘Arise, and go through the length and breadth of the land, since I will give it unto thee; and yet he did not receive an inheritance in it, not even a footstep, but was always a stranger and a pilgrim therein.’”

Ch. 33:3 : “The predicted blessing, therefore, belongs unquestionably to the times of the Kingdom, when the righteous shall bear rule upon their rising from the dead, when also the creation, having been renovated and set free, shall fructify with an abundance of all kinds of food, thanks to the dew of heaven and the fertility of the earth.”

Ch. 34:1 : “Then, too, Isaiah himself has plainly declared that there shall be joy of this nature at the resurrection of the just, when he says: ‘The dead shall rise again. Those, too, who are in the tombs shall arise, and those who are in the earth shall rejoice. For the dew from Thee is health to them.’

And this, again Ezekiel, who also says: ‘Behold, I will open your tombs, and will bring you forth out of your graves. When I will draw my people from the sepulchres, I will put my breath in you that ye shall live. I will place you on your own land and ye shall know that I am the Lord.’ And again, the same speaks thus: ‘These things saith the Lord, I will gather Israel from all nations whither they have been driven, and I shall be sanctified in them in the sight of the sons of the nations: and they shall dwell in their own land, which I gave to my servant Jacob. And they shall dwell in it in peace.’”

Ch. 35:2 : “Now this is what has been said by the Apostle: ‘For the fashion of this world passeth away.’ To the same purpose did the Lord declare: ‘Heaven and earth shall pass away.’ When these things, therefore, pass away on this earth – according to John, the Lord’s disciple, ‘then the New Jerusalem above shall descend (...) as a bride adorned for her husband’, saying: ‘this is the tabernacle of God in which God will dwell with men.’ Of this Jerusalem the former one is an image – that Jerusalem of the former earth in which the righteous are disciplined beforehand for the purpose of incorruption and are thus prepared for their salvation. And of this tabernacle (or temple) Moses received the scheme on the Mount [Horeb].*

Nothing is capable of being allegorized [unless the text itself indicates otherwise], but all things are steadfast and true, they are on solid ground, having been given by God for righteous men’s enjoyment. For as it is God who truly raises up a man, so also does man truly rise from the dead, and not allegorically, as I have shown repeatedly. And as he rises actually, he shall be actually prepared for incorruption, and shall go forward and flourish in the times of the Kingdom, ready to receive the glory of the Father. Then, when all things are made new, he shall truly dwell in the city of God. For it is said: ‘He that sitteth on the throne said: Behold, I make all things new.’ And the Lord says: ‘Write all this, for these words are faithful and true. And He said to me: They are done.’ And indeed this is the truth of the matter.”

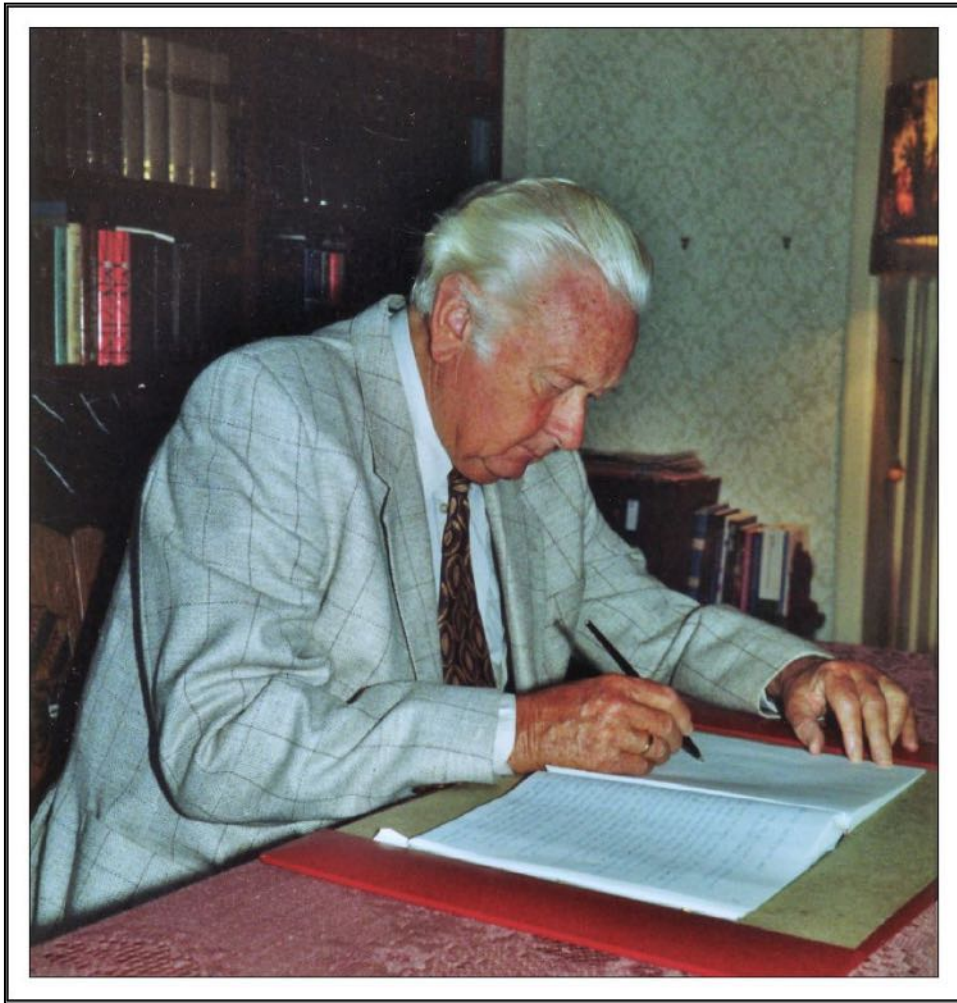
* Jesus says to J.N.S.R. (Je Ne Suis Rien – I am nothing, or Jésus Notre Seigneur Revient – or Jesus our Lord returns) on Sept. 18, 2007: «« The Third Temple is the very expression of God’s Rest after having gathered together all his children. Erected in all minds, that are inhabited by God’s Holy Spirit, it will see the light of day, ‘the Lord’s great Day on Earth’. This is the Heavenly Jerusalem come down among you. »»



APPENDIX 21

Thou wilt be a Kingdom of Priests

Before Dr. A. A. Leenhouts died at the age of 86 after a turbulent life, he left his spiritual testament in a series of books published under the title “The Shofar Series”, in which he appeals to believers the world over to stand guarantors, in word and deed, for a dignified transfer from the “Jewish State” to the status, destined for this people, of “Kingdom of Priests”. It is in this spirit that the present article has been written, with permission from the current publisher of his writings. ⁽¹⁾



The court of the end of times

In the introduction to his “Competition of Altars” (1981) Reverend A. A. Leenhouts writes:

«« ...What God has ordained on this earth regarding the religious cycle of feasts of Israel is utilised, when the fulfilments come to pass, as items in his own AGENDA. Exactly on the day of the Passover He gives his Son as the Lamb that takes away the sins of the world. And when the day of Pentecost has come, the promised Spirit descends on that very day. This punctuality of order raises the question: And the third feast, the Feast of Tabernacles: did God erase it from his

agenda? Is this crowning feast no longer considered for fulfilment within the larger framework of world-history? Is there a missing link? ...NOT SO! The Feast of Tabernacles will incontrovertibly come to its fulfilment.

It is this fulfilment which is dealt with in my writings. In this respect the Kingdom of God has indeed come near. The breakthrough of this Kingdom is closely connected with the 'coming in of the fulness of the Gentiles, and the Jewish people's coming to their Messianic mission'. Thus we are approaching the forecourt of the fulfilment of all things. It is this penultimate epoch in world history that the book of Revelation deals with in a symbolism that thoroughly conceals. There is a blank page in that last book of the Bible, mentioned in Ch. 10. A small part of the apocalyptic film had to be cut out by the Apostle John, for he heard: "...write them not."

However, it is also for this penultimate secret that the words of the prophet Amos are meant (3:7): *"Surely the Lord God does nothing unless He reveals his secret to his servants the prophets."* The thunders will not remain sealed up for ever. The fulfilment of Israel's cycle of feasts has thrice remained a secret. Through prophecy God has had this secret revealed three times. And three times has the fulfilment of the feasts been a very abundant mercy of God.

Called in 1948

The Lord intervened in my life (Leenhouts writes) in a very extraordinary way after I had come back from a holiday in 1948 and wanted to take up my work again as minister of the Dutch Reformed Church in Enschede. Suddenly there was the impact of a miracle, so stirring for the one experiencing it that any description is bound to fall short. Suddenly my study was ablaze. In spirit I heard a violent storm and had the experience of the apparition of an angel. I went to the window and saw that outside there was not a breath of wind and not a leaf was stirring. Then I went to the bedroom, looked in the mirror, and observed that I was like a dead man. Afterwards I went back to the study, and as led by an invisible hand I took hold of a pad and sat down behind my desk. Then the Lord spoke literally, word for word: *"My children have prayed, and I answer..."*

The Lord spoke about Israel's future and about the coming World Revival. He gave messages for the churches. And afterwards, for many days at a stretch, He showed me in burning visions the identity of the last text of Malachi, in the last book of the Old Testament, and of Revelation 10. Each word swept through me like a flame. The sweat of death was dripping from me, and without having any control of my hand or mind, sentence after sentence was written down on paper. God revealed the secret of Revelation 10: the secret of the thunders, the sealed-up penultimate mystery. In spirit I was confronted with Christ's agony in the garden, with His sufferings on the cross, and His abandonment by God, but also with the immense power of His resurrection and His future. In turn I had to see our infinite guilt for His Blood and the riches of His pity in the coming revival.

Concealment impossible

When the Lord speaks, concealment of his message is impossible. This was experienced by all the prophets, and Jeremiah has very honestly admitted it: *"Then I said, I will not make mention of Him, nor speak any more in His name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay."*

Likewise it is impossible for me to conceal the message and the view of the end of times, given to me in direct words and visions. I declare herewith, and this declaration has before the face of the Lord the power of an oath: *“Lord God, Thou knowest that I am aware of nothing else but that Thou didst speak in 1948, and I am passing on this experience and the exegetic insight that has immediately arisen from it, to the best of my ability.”*

The acceptable year of the LORD

In the preface to the “Shofar Series” he writes the following:

«« In order that the Jewish people should be enabled to fulfil its Messianic office given to it by God, the sacred status of Israel in the midst of the nations shall have to show agreements with the status of Levi in the midst of the other tribes. Levi was, after all, destined to fulfil the service of the Temple. The Jewish people, from whom the Messiah sprang forth, shall therefore have to be exempted for the sake of these official duties. ⁽²⁾

Thus the prophet Isaiah, driven by the Spirit of God, proclaims a year of the Lord’s good will with the words (61:2-9): *“To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn, to console those who mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified. And they shall rebuild the old ruins. They shall raise up the former desolations and they shall repair the ruined cities, the desolations of many generations. Strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the foreigner shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers. But you shall be named the priests of the LORD. They shall call you the servants of our God. You shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory you shall boast. (...) Their descendants shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the nations. All who see them shall acknowledge them that they are the posterity whom the LORD has blessed.”*

This prophecy of Isaiah is in principle fulfilled in Jesus (cf. Lk. 4:18-21), and will be further fulfilled at the dawning of “*the acceptable year of the Lord*”, the empire of peace for all nations. The only basis given to us by God whereby we can fulfil our vocation towards Israel as the priestly people of the sacred Messianic times is: Jesus of Nazareth, the Prince of Peace, who as Lamb of God takes away the sin of the world by His Blood ⁽³⁾ and who, according to John 11:52 also died to gather together the scattered children of God.

The restoration of the true Pentecost altar

By way of a SIGN, a small group of believers in the Netherlands and New Zealand held special Last Supper services for a number of years, services wherein a start was made on our assignment to give exemptions the chosen people so that they can perform their priestly office. These believers took the initiative as in response to the proposal made by Leenhouts in his book entitled “An Easter for Yahweh” (Dutch ed. pp. 251-52), a proposal that he later repeated in various sermons as a sort of appeal to the whole of Christianity: ...not because a date in itself has any value in the kingdom of God but in order to be clear about the sign I make the following PROPOSAL to all who still believe in Jesus Christ, as he has been revealed by the prophets and apostles:

In city after city, village after village, neighbourhood after neighbourhood the Holy Celebration of the Last Supper should be held on the first Friday of the month. Start to prepare this. Let it be a Peniel wrestling (Gen. 32:24-30). Expect that the breaking of His body on Golgotha now has the power to cure His mystic body, the community. Believe in the power of His Blood, so that thereby the dark satanic powers, that keep alive both the false unity and the guilty separation, may be broken. Conquer the devil and the antichrist by the Blood of the Lamb! Expect the restoration of the true Pentecost Altar over the whole world. At this reuniting expect the Fire of the Spirit! Pray in the same spirit as the first community as described in Acts 4:24-30, and the restored community will be filled with the Holy Spirit in order to speak the Word of God with open-heartedness 'now'.

Here we would emphasise that this is a sign, just as the prophet Jeremiah was ordered to purchase a plot of land as a sign from God that – after the period of banishment – once more houses, plots and vineyards would be purchased in the land (Jer. 32). During these services the Last Supper was celebrated according to the guideline given by Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians (11:26): *“For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes.”*

This witness was accompanied by our task of mercy towards the Jewish people. The offerings brought to the services were deposited in a “Cup and Grain Fund”,⁽⁴⁾ specially set up for the purpose with the aim of devoting half to the witness of the people of God and the other half as a gesture of mercy to this people, symbolically known as the grain portion.



The document

In 1969, on the 2nd day of Pesach / Good Friday, the grain portion of the sum of money thus far collected was offered to Israel as a first-fruits gift, with the unfolding of a document at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem proclaiming the significance of the gift. The document bore the following text:

In the year of 1948 God raised up a prophet in Holland. The message he received brought a disclosure of the penultimate secret of Revelation 10 and refers to Israel's future. The preaching of this prophet called by God has caused us, Dutch and Swiss Christians, to concentrate on the biblical promises for Israel, and our attention was particularly drawn to the words of Exodus 19:6:

**AND YE SHALL BE UNTO ME A KINGDOM OF PRIESTS
AND A HOLY NATION.**

Comparing these words with Isaiah 61, we see that nothing else can be meant by these words but Israel's Messianic destiny in the future

KINGDOM OF PEACE FOR ALL NATIONS

According to Isaiah 61 the holy status of the people of Israel in the midst of the nations will resemble the status Levi had among the other tribes. This tribe was exempted from every duty in order to fulfil its priestly task; it was not allowed to possess its own territory in a legal sense; it did not need to maintain its own economy; for "the Lord was their inheritance" (Numbers 18:20); and yet the Priests and the Levites had the right to dwell in the Promised Land. The whole nation owed gratitude to God for having been brought out of the land of Egypt through the Blood of the Paschal Lamb, and so this structure became possible. Now the question arises: What motive will the peoples of the world ever find to have Israel 'eat their riches' according to Isaiah 61:5-6, so that Israel may officiate as a Kingdom of Priests?

Through God's mercy we have discovered the meaning of the Blood of the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world,

JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE PRINCE OF PEACE

And now we have become aware that with this Blood God has given us the only basis on which to fulfill our vocation towards Israel as the priestly nation of the Messianic time of salvation. We are now making a start with the offering of our 'ransom' for Israel's exemption from worldly duties in favour of their priestly office in the coming KINGDOM OF GOD and we believe we must do so, in spite of the fact that up until today Israel has rejected Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah. For the stumbling of Levi never dissolved the duty of the other tribes to pay ransom. Thus for us, Christians, The Words of our Master remain unassailable: "...salvation is of the Jews" (John 4:22), and so the responsibility for the people of divine election remains ours. (Romans 11:31)

As a small group of believers we have gathered in special Supper Services an amount of 14,000 guilders in the 'Cup and Grain fund', with the purpose of using half of it for the witness to the people of God, and offering the other half to Israel as a 'sheaf of the first fruits'. We realise very well that the small amount of 7,000 guilders is only of symbolic value; but this was the same with Jeremiah's field. (Jeremiah 32:15) And although in a document of this sort we can only mention a few aspects of the great many things that have become clear to us, and that have moved us to make this offer, we believe unconditionally that God has shown us the way along which His plan for Israel and for the world will be fulfilled.

The Board of the Foundation “Getuigenis en Eenheid” (Witness and Unity) in Amsterdam signs in the name of sympathetic believers. The Board declares that the amount mentioned in the document will be remitted as soon as the notice of acceptance from the responsible body for Israel has reached the Secretary of the Foundation.

Amsterdam, signed on January 26th 1969

*JERUSALEM, date of presentation April 4th 1969,
Second Passover – Good Friday (Leviticus 23:11)*

The open letter

A personal report of the events described above was given to the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Israel and a written report was presented to the government and people of Israel, by means of an Open Letter, both dated 4th April 1969, the Second Day of Pesach or Good Friday:

OPEN LETTER TO GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF ISRAEL

*Most honourable Members of the Government,
Most honourable People of Israel,*

You are most certainly aware of the fact that the idea of STATE is not to be compared with the high STATUS to which God has called you, namely to be a Kingdom of Priests and a Holy Nation among the nations. (Exodus 19:6; Isaiah 61:5-6) To function merely as a state among other nations means “being like all the nations” (1 Samuël 8:20). Officiating as a Kingdom of Priests however, requires a state of holiness, of being set apart for the service of God, just as the tribe of Levi was set apart from the other tribes.

The situation in which you now find yourselves draws East and West together like a magnet, in sharp opposition to one another, a situation where Holy Scripture calls you God’s first-born (Exodus 4:22), and because of this you should be regarded as representing all nations, a situation in which a ‘to be or not to be’ position of your people irrevocably creates a border situation for all mankind. Thus the fulfilment of the promise of God regarding your status in the Messianic time becomes an ABSOLUTE CONDITION for the survival of all mankind. For a political solution can only come forth from a religious solution. This is the dimension that has been forgotten in all the diplomatic proposals for peace in the Middle East and in general for peace all over the world. That is why every political project in which Israel’s election by God is ignored, is a request addressed to the Eternal to come with that curse about which Malachi spoke through the Holy Ghost (Malachi 4:6). In the meantime the heavens above you remain as brass and not a drop of ‘shalom’ falls on this thirsty earth. The first signs of this need are already tangibly present. The full harvest of this misery will also come, namely the absolute end to the life of the peoples of the world.

But in whichever way the Jew or the Christian may conceive the urgent need of a fulfilment of the divine promises regarding Israel's STATUS as a Kingdom of Priests, anybody will feel that such an action of fulfilment goes far beyond human capacity and will therefore require a Divine intervention of such intensity and extent, that we have to go back to Moses and the Exodus and to Elijah and the Carmel judgement in order to find words that can express our expectations. But sacred history does give many examples, in the fulfilling of divine promises, of the community accepting in faith a

DIVINE JUDGEMENT

Was not the celebration of the Passover in itself an abandoning of oneself to the judgement of God during the supper? Was not the Carmel judgement a judgement of God and would this judgement ever have taken place, if the people had reacted to Elijah's proposal with a 'no'? (1 Kings 18:24)

IS THE GOD OF ELIJAH DEAD?

As truly as this God lives – I pray you, Israel, in His Name – by virtue of a divine vocation which came to me in 1948, to say 'YES' to the invitation to accept a judgement of God in order to come to a religious solution. There are but two possibilities: either a Messiah, who has nothing to do with Jesus of Nazareth, will intervene in such a way, that you will be dragged out of your religious and political twilight and will receive heavenly authority for the official Status of Kingdom of Priests, with all the accompanying consequences for the gentile nations (Isaiah 61:5-6), or this high Status will be offered to you by Him Who, as the Christians believe with the apostle Paul, "ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things" (Ephesians 4:10). The fulfilment of Isaiah 61:5-6 belongs also to this.

Well, Israel, we ask you to accept a 'competition of altars' (1 Kings 18) before the forum of the whole world. Build your Jewish national 'altar' – in whatever way you may see it – but build it in confrontation with another altar and expect a judgement of the Lord with absolute sincerity. God will certainly answer. For the way history ends also counts as a judgement of the Lord (Psalm 105:19). Then, over against your 'altar' an 'altar' will be built through the WORD and the SPIRIT of Jesus Christ and on the basis of His Blood, the Blood of Reconciliation. It will be built out of love for you, for those who are helping to build it sincerely wish you to achieve the holy STATUS of Kingdom of Priests in the coming Kingdom of God.

In the enclosed text of the document, which was presented on the Second Day of Pesach, that is to say on Good Friday, as a gift of the first fruits 'shaken' like a sheaf before Israel's God, you will find a model in miniature of that which was awakened in Holland and Switzerland through a prophetic message under divine confirmation by means of very great signs and miracles. And what God has started on a small scale, He will bring to its conclusion on a worldwide scale.

What the spiritual background of this proposal is, what secrets were revealed, how a 'competition of altars' can be implemented in practice, what aspects will be opened, how many delicate and hard points can be touched – in short all possible questions that may arise with this proposal – I will gladly discuss with you.

I will end by pointing out to you that at present no Priest's hands could be found capable of accepting this offering of the first fruits from the gentile world IN THE SAME SENSE in which it was given by the believers. Sincerity bids us to hold the offering in reserve for you until these hands are available. But should your official bodies decide now or later to inquire thoroughly into the motives of this proposal, the believers who have offered this gift sheaf of the first fruits will certainly be willing to contribute, with the money mentioned above, to the costs of an investigation.

With cordial greetings and a prayer in my heart for the peace of Jerusalem,

Signed A.A. Leenhouts
April 4th, 1969

This money is still set aside, for shall the lion roar but not spring? In this way the implementation of the offering need not be doubted. The first fruits gift will be accepted. You can count on it!

To the brother-people

In February of 1970, on the feast of Aïd El Kebir, the sacrificial feast of Israel's brother-people, the Arabs, Leenhout took a profetic message to King Hassan II of Morocco, and spoke with the rector and a group of professors at the University of Fes and sent an Open Letter (in French) to all the Arab countries via their embassies there.

OPEN LETTER TO THE RELIGIOUS DIRECTORS OF THE ISLAMIC PEOPLES

THANKS TO THE GOOD OFFICES OF HIS MAJESTY KING HASSAN II OF MOROCCO

- Rabat, February 1970, on the feast of Aïd el Kebir -

You Excellencies, directors of the Islamic peoples,

With assurances of my deep respect for your high dignity, please allow me to mention first of all why I am addressing you by means of an open letter.

A divine vocation overcame me in 1948, concerning the prophecies with regard to the Christian Churches.

This is how the Supreme One talked to me concerning the people of the Jews:
"I shall take over in vengeance the calls of those who jeered at Me when I hung in the depths of hell and I will call on Elijah and my vengeance is sweet. My spirit roars out for Elijah."

The Lord showed me how Israel has, for about 2,000 years, been following a route parallel to that taken by Jesus – that is: expelled from Jerusalem, this people is walking the Via Dolorosa and is now crucified on its governmental State as on a cross.

The final destiny of Israel is not to be found in the possession of statehood, so that it becomes like all the nations (1 Sam. 8:20). According to the Word given by God to Moses in Exodus 19:6, its destiny is: *"You shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation."* This is repeated in Isaiah 61.

The tribe of Levi was exempted from all burdens, save its duties of office (I Chron. 23:3-5), should possess no lands in the legal sense, was not obliged to run its own economy, for *"I am your part and inheritance"* and yet the Priests and Levites had the right of residence in the Promised Land. The entire people owed thanks to God for their liberation from Egypt by the Blood of the Paschal Lamb and thus this structure was made possible.

I have announced these matters to the Government and people of Israel in an open letter, and at Easter 1969 I proclaimed everything in a document that I consecrated publicly at the 'Wailing Wall'. Among other things, I wrote the following to all the members of the Government and the people of Israel:

«« ...The situation in which you now find yourselves draws East and West together like a magnet, in sharp opposition to one another, a situation where Holy Scripture calls you God's first-born (Exodus 4:22), and because of this you should be regarded as representing all nations, a situation in which a 'to be or not to be' position of your people irrevocably creates a border situation for all mankind. Thus the fulfilment of the promise of God regarding your status in the Messianic time becomes an ABSOLUTE CONDITION for the survival of all mankind.

For a political solution can only come forth from a religious solution. This is the dimension that has been forgotten in all the diplomatic proposals for peace in the Middle East and in general for peace all over the world. That is why every political project in which Israel's election by God is ignored, is a request addressed to the Eternal to come with that curse about which Malachi spoke through the Holy Ghost (Malachi 4:6). In the meantime the heavens above you remain as brass and not a drop of 'shalom' falls on this thirsty earth. The first signs of this need are already tangibly present. The full harvest of this misery will also come, namely the absolute end to the life of the peoples of the world. (...) As truly as this God lives – I pray you, Israel, in his Name – by virtue of a divine vocation which came to me in 1948, to say 'YES' to the invitation to accept a judgement of God in order to come to a religious solution. There are but two possibilities: either a Messiah, who has nothing to do with Jesus of Nazareth, will intervene in such a way, that you will be dragged out of your religious and political twilight and will receive heavenly authority for the official Status of Kingdom of Priests, with all the accompanying consequences for the gentile nations (Isaiah 61:5-6), or this high Status will be offered to you by Him who, as the Christians believe with the Apostle Paul, "ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things" (Ephesians 4:10). The fulfilment of Isaiah 61:5-6 belongs also to this. Well, Israel, we ask you to accept a 'competition of altars' (1 Kings 18) before the forum of the whole world... »»

For us, Christians, this duel signifies among other things obedience, in joining the deed to the word, observing everything that God reveals to us in his Word regarding the future structure of the empire of peace. And thus Israel must be enabled to function as the Kingdom of Priests on the basis of the recognition of the Blood of the Divine Lamb by analogy with Levi.

That is why on Good Friday 1969, the Second Day of Pesach, a small number of believers offered a symbolic offering, collected at the table of the Holy Supper, in order to demonstrate their willingness to obey God's plan in word and deed.

It goes without saying that there were no priests' hands to receive our gift because Israel has not yet exchanged its position of State for that of Kingdom of Priests. Our conscience bade us to keep back this offering.

Since your peoples belong to the 'tent of Abraham', I was given the order to report to you all that has been said above – that is, how Israel has been called to accept to recognise the events to come as a Divine judgement. In looking at the history of Israel's exile we, Christians, have a collective debt regarding the current state of affairs, and we must admit this publicly before the Islamic world.

What is the spiritual motive underlying the above proposal? What are the secrets that have been revealed? And in what way has new light been shed on those parts of sacred Scripture concerning the future of our peoples? With a great deal of recognition I would be only too pleased to explain this to you, according to my powers, either in writing or – much preferably – personally.

I beg you, your Excellencies, to accept the expression of my deepest respect,

Signed: A.A. Leenhouts V.D.M.
Foundation Testimony and Unity

God does not go back on his pledges

By way of conclusion, I would now like to quote Dr. Piet de Vries, minister of the "Hersteld Hervormde Gemeente" (Restored Dutch Reformed church) in Waarder (Netherlands):

«« The New Testament shows us that the death and resurrection of Christ is 'the' turning point in the history of salvation (in God's dealings with His people). The coming into being of the New Testament community, with its Jewish roots – though the gentiles also are given a place therein – is tied up with those dealings. Nowhere in the New Testament is it said that God will go back on this. The church of the New Testament is not an intermezzo that is foreign to the progressive line of revelation from the old to the new dispensation (oikonomia) but has a fixed and permanent place there, until the people of the Lord from both the old and the new dispensation enter the new Jerusalem.

(...) The Christian church that came into being as a current within Judaism, with a position for gentiles such as has not yet been seen within Judaism,

developed into a current alongside that of Judaism. This caused many a Christian to lose sight of the special position held by the Jewish people.

(...) Amidst all the differences, we must hold fast to the unity of the old and new dispensation; a unity grounded in the unity of God Himself and of His merciful dealings with Man. In the New Testament the covenant with Abraham is signed as the basis of the New Testament community and that covenant is the basis for the expectation that God will once again take pity on the whole of Israel. Together with the saints of the Old Testament those of the New Testament await the descent of the new Jerusalem from heaven. All unfulfilled prophecies from both old and new dispensation will be fulfilled, both spiritually and materially. And then all that is material will be spiritual and the spiritual also material. »» (Profetisch Perspectief, winter 2008, nr. 57, p. 37)

Summary: Hubert Luns

Notes

(1) The books by A. A. Leenhouts are available at **Testimony and Unity**, Postbox 64814, 2506 CE The Hague, Netherlands. The English Shofar book series is also available as an E-book and is freely downloadable: <https://testimonyandunity.com>

(2) Christ is a priest according to the order of Melchizedek, and since He is from a tribe not that of Levi – namely Judah – a change has also taken place in the assignment of his office (see Hebrews 7). This explains that the state of Israel in the midst of the other nations is destined to fulfil the temple service with its accompanying benefits. Dr. Leenhouts' explanation of the analogy of the sacred status that Israel must display with that of the tribe of Levi is as follows:

«« Just as the tribe of Levi in the Old Testament was exempted in order to be able to fulfil its priestly task, so must the entire people of Israel (as Kingdom of Priests) be exempted in order to serve the nations of the world as a sort of ombuds-people. This is the priestly task that the Jewish people – which does not signify the political State of Israel - will fulfil in the future. This is all in accord with Exodus 19:6, where God gives to the people of Israel the official status of “kingdom of priests”. The exemption given in order to be able to fulfil the priestly task will be granted by the non-Jewish peoples (see Isaiah 61:5-6), who will bring their offerings to this end in the united celebration of the Sacred Last Supper, thereby creating the condition for a dignified transfer from the 'State' of Israel to their 'status' of kingdom of priests. »»

(3) These sentences are taken from the document placed on the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem on 4th April 199 by A. A. Leenhouts.

(4) The “Cup and Grain Fund” is named after the story of Joseph, where Joseph allowed the theft of the “prophetic cup” (by his brothers) to be accompanied by mercy in the form of “grain aid”.



The Three Liturgical Calenders of Israel



The Jewish festive calendar that is part of the ordinances, which is the third section of the Sinaitic covenant, went through a prolonged series of adaptations after the Jewish people had returned from the Babylonian exile (beginning 5th century BC). It is impossible to trace back all those adaptations and track their evolution through the ages, although a number of things can be known.

Dr. Julian Morgenstern (1881-1976) did pioneering work in that respect. He was one of the world's great Bible scholars from the last century. From 1921 until his retirement in '47 he was president of Hebrew Union College in the U.S. (a so-called reform institute, and thus liberal). He made it part of his life's work to investigate the intricacies of the different calendars of Israel. In the course of his work he discovered much, but there still exists large uncharted territory. This is what the article is about, being covered in a nutshell.

29.138 – The Liturgical Calendar in Jesus' time is Unknown

There are many people, even well educated, who think that the calendars of Israel and the counting of days, as are currently in use, have always been that way; in any case did not change much. How could the Biblical prescriptions have been tampered with!? In general, people assume that in Jesus' days the liturgical calendar was roughly the same as it is known today. But even that is not true. Each attempt – and there have been many – to calculate backwards the date of crucifixion of Christ, based on the present Jewish counting of days, are bound to fail. There has even been a scholarly work that tries to reconstruct a day to day account of Jesus' public life! I want to stress that the only trustworthy method to arrive at the dates of his birth and death has to come from Roman history. On that premise, the undersigned has made an I might say a successful attempt

to discover the year of Jesus' birth, building on the sublime achievements of the great Scottish scholar Sir William Ramsay (1851-1939),²¹⁴⁾ but that is not on the table now.

The usual astronomical calculations to arrive at the year of birth of Christ are of no avail. Johannes Keppler (1571-1630) tried to find the year of birth on the assumption that the Star of Bethlehem was an astronomical event. Of course, there was a Star of Bethlehem, but it could not have been astronomical. How could a star indicate the exact spot of a cradle! What it was, remains open to speculation, but we do know that it looked like a star.

Julian Morgenstern published seven studies on this subject in the period between 1924 and 1953, covering 617 pages.²¹⁵⁾ That was in the HUCA (Hebrew Union College Annual). These annual reports had scientific value. All HUCA publications can be consulted for free on JSTOR's website. Specialized libraries have a reprint of these publications. In this light it remains puzzling why so few people are aware of these things. This will have to do with the fact that the Talmud hardly mentions the calendar changes in order to avoid confusion, but also with the fact that no one has yet understood why it was thought that those changes were necessary at the time.²¹⁶⁾

Calendar I is also called the Canaanitic calendar, because the names of the months (not their liturgical aspects) are Canaanitic. Calendar II came into use in about 600 before Christ when they changed those names by numbers. Calendar III is the calendar that gradually took shape after the Babylonian captivity, and much later names were again introduced for the different months, this time Babylonian. Though Calendar II probably underwent more changes than only numbers instead of names, we will in this article concentrate on Calendar III.

29.139 – The most Important Changes

After the captivity that, according to the prophecy of Daniel, finished 483 years before the birth of the Messiah, the so-called Great Synagogue came into existence. The Men of the Great Synagogue, at certain times numbering more than a hundred members, instituted through ordinances the takkanot, the new festive calendar of Israel and its related institutions and customs, which had to be accepted by the people as a natural development and therefore could result only from a slow and gradual process. For the sake of simplicity and to reinforce the argument, all changes were attributed to Ezra the scribe, while it can be assumed that in reality his successors were also involved. This is illustrated by a number of specific alterations in the Sacred Text, which from motives of reverence, are sometimes called the corrections of Ezra, although they can be traced back to

214) Sir William Mitchell Ramsay: "Was Christ born at Bethlehem? (a study on the credibility of St Luke)" - Hodder and Stoughton, London # 1905. As well as "The Bearing of Recent Discovery on the Trustworthiness of the New Testament (based on a series of lectures - 1913)" - Hodder and Stoughton, London • New York • Toronto # 1915.

215) Julian Morgenstern's contributions for HUCA on the calendars of Israel are as follows: "The Three Calendars of Ancient Israel" (1924 & 1926); "The Gates of Righteousness - about the transferral of New Year's Day from the tenth to the first of the seventh month" (1929); "Supplementary Studies in the Calendars of Ancient Israel" (1935); "The Chanukkah festival and the Calendar of Ancient Israel" (1947 & 1948); "Two Prophecies from the fourth century B.C. and the evolution of Yom Kippur" (1952-53) See also: "Two Ancient Israelite Agricultural Festivals" in Jewish Quarterly Review (new series) 8 (1917) pp. 31-54.

216) In "Articles on Questions of Chronology" of "Proofs of the Life and Death of Jesus", it is discussed that because of catastrophic events, meted out as a divine retribution, there was a slight tilting of the axis of the earth, which caused a recession of the equinoxes by nine days, and this in turn called for an adjustment of the religious calendar.

the Hellenistic period. What happened in detail is impossible to determine because in general the events in Judeah under the Persian rule are shrouded in darkness. The Great Synagogue, forerunner of the Sanhedrin, was no permanent body with regular sessions, and perpetuated itself until the occupation of Judeah in 332 BC by Alexander the Great.

Let us review the most striking changes. After no more than seventy years of Babylonian exile the Feast of Tabernacles with its joyous nature was placed after the Rite of Azazel (scapegoat), which it had previously preceded as it was still observed until some time after the period of Ezra and Nehemiah, the prophets of the period after the Babylonian exile. And Yom Kippur, or the Day of Atonement, replaced the Rite of Azazel with a ceremony that is clearly very much different. Yom Kippur later merged with the day named in Lev. 23:24 and Num. 29:1, known in the Bible as Yom Teruah, which means the day of the blowing (of the Shofar trumpet). Teruah was a simple ceremony that may have marked the difference between the lunar and solar year, the one being about eleven days shorter than the other. The changes in the calendar concurrently went, as appears to be the case, with a few changes in the books of Moses.²¹⁷⁾

Under Calendars I and II Israel followed a solar year in which both equinoxes, those of Eastern and Sukkoth – when day and night are of equal length – played a central part. Calendar III, however, was based on the 19-year Babylonian lunar-solar cycle; the equinox was of no importance any more. Synodic lunar and the solar time are in agreement almost every 19 years: that is, the moon will be in the same phase on the calendar day every 19 years. However, the Jewish method does not produce a repetition of dates within any significant length of time: they more or less repeat after 247 years (13 x 19). The Jewish liturgical calendar only became final, so it seems, in about the 9th and 10th centuries AD.

As concerns those changes, it is of interest that the term Rosh Ha-Shana (head of the year) was not applied until at least the 2nd century AD. It was not only the Babylonian captivity that threw a spanner in the works. Following the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD, causing the practice of animal sacrifice to be stopped, the synagogue liturgy was enlarged, new traditions were suggested, and emphases were shifted in an attempt to keep alive the religious practice of a people scattered outside their homeland and tragically stripped of their Temple, which latter is the only place where animal sacrifice is permitted. It was at this stage that the New Year shifted to the New Moon of the first day of the seventh month (Tishri). In the pre-exilic time this day was situated on the equinox of 10 Tishri, but as said, this is of no consequence any more.



217) I would like to call your attention to Exodus 23:16 and 34:22, stating: “the Feast of Ingathering (Sukkoth or Tabernacles) at the end of the year [therefore before the equinox]”, and also Deuteronomy 31:10: “‘at the end’ of a Sabbath year (7-year period), at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles [therefore before the equinox]”. Now compare this with Leviticus 23:34: “the 15th of this 7th month shall be the Feast of Tabernacles [therefore after the equinox]” and also Numbers 29:12: “on the 15th of the 7th month you shall have a holy convocation (therefore after the equinox)”. The subsequent verses in Numbers 29 make clear that this holy convocation is the beginning of the Feast of Tabernacles. The inconsistencies of these texts [at the same time before and after the equinox] cannot possibly have been an integral part of Moses’ books.

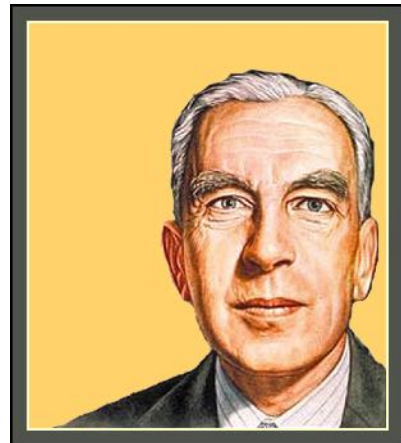
Up and Downfall Civilizations



The rise and fall of civilizations is a fascinating subject that did not become a serious topic until the second half of the 18th century, especially among scientists who had distanced themselves from the Christian faith. They, like everyone else, did see the ‘imperfections’ in a culture’s evolutionary cycle, but that this could have anything to do with a figure called Satan did not cross their minds. First, Toynbee’s work is highlighted. His very comprehensive research identifies dying populations, invasions and cultural disintegration as causes of the internal decline of cultures. Unwin’s research, on the other hand, reveals a strong correlation between a society’s sexual restraint and its cultural energy and achievements. Contrasting these secular views, the author also introduces a religious perspective, arguing that the disregard of God and the pernicious influence of Satan are critical factors in the decline of cultures throughout history, foregrounding the importance of a God-given moral order as the basis for lasting peace and prosperity.

30.140 – An Assessment of Toynbee’s Work

Arnold Toynbee (1889-1975), deeply inspired by Oswald Spengler, was a British historian whose twelve-part series studies the rise and fall of civilizations, confining himself to the last 5,000 years. Before that time there were no large organized societies, at least not within the framework of current scientific understanding. He has been working on this for over forty years. This book with more than 7,000 pages can be called the thickest book ever written by a single scientist. Toynbee rightly saw a civilization as culturally bound. The nation-state is subordinate to this. He saw the rise of a new civilization as a creative response to pressures, whether social or natural



Historian Arnold J. Toynbee (1947)

(geographical, climatic, etc.). Toynbee argued that civilizations die by suicide, not murder, and he was right about that. He also believed that the inner strength of a civilization is unbeatable unless the entire population is massacred (genocide) by an advancing 'civilization'. The decline of a civilization is basically determined by three factors, as Toynbee believed to be discovering: dying populations, unresisted invasions, and disintegrating cultures. Civilizations will continue to thrive if they manage to meet these challenges. If they fail they are doomed.

Research over the past decades provides a further explanation for 'populations on the way to extinction' that is unrelated from civilization itself: if, due to climatic or other reasons, the soil and waters start to produce less and less food, or food of an inferior quality, this may be the cause of the demise of a civilization, as was probably the case with the Minoan civilization, the Gupta Empire and the Mayas. The continued growth of the population can also cause a relative food shortage. What is happening in Yemen is an illustration of this: an extreme population growth coupled with a depletion of the water resources and thus food capacity. It must be said that often not one factor but a multitude of factors tilts the balance.



From these observations it is easy to see that Western culture is currently in distress (this was written in March 2013). According to Eurostat, the autonomous population growth in the European Union will have turned into a decline by 2015. And we have that entirely to ourselves. Even with an aggressive immigration policy, the numbers in Europe will fall sharply after 2035. For Greece, Italy, Spain, and Germany, the situation is already dramatic with fertility rates between 1.3 and 1.4 – which is the number of offspring of the average woman (the figure must be 2.1 to keep the population at par). This means that the population of these countries will be halved between 2000 and 2050! Due to immigration and the higher fertility rate of Muslim women in Europe, which stood at 3.5 in 2005, it is estimated that by 2050 about 30% of the European population will be Muslim. This brings us straight to the second point of Toynbee's list: unresisted invasions. The Islamic invasion is one of a foreign invader where the militant phase, Islam currently goes through, does not tolerate competitors. The multicultural melting pot does not apply to ideologies!

Toynbee conceived of the idea that the study of civilizations always carries an irrational element, something that is beyond our direct observation, and so he also called his work the study of metahistory. He observes, basing himself on a statement by Christopher Dawson, yet another civilization expert: "*Metahistory is concerned with the nature of history, the meaning of history and the cause and significance of historical change. It arises out of the study of history, and is akin to metaphysics and theology. The metahistorian seeks to integrate his study of reality in some higher dimension than that of human affairs as these present themselves to him phenomenally.*" Now we should not conclude from this that he was a religious man. On the contrary.

Toynbee dreamt of a unified world where Buddhism would be the only missionary in the field, having replaced Christianity and Islam who both, in his words, "*have demanded from their adherents an exclusive allegiance, unwilling to tolerate the coexistence of any other religion except their own precursors, and these only in an inferior status and on humiliating terms.*" (Part 6, Universal States) Nonetheless, Toynbee has been

criticized for overemphasizing the regenerative force of religion! Toynbee saw religion as an expression of the subconscious trying to come to terms with the elusive. On the other hand he doubted whether religion corresponded to some reality outside of man. This is also apparent from the title of the chapter that deals with it: "*Social responses to an illusion or to a reality?*" (nr. 41) In any case, he saw it as an inseparable part of being human that in its expression transcends the cultural entity. Toynbee's approach of Jewry was less than flattering. He called Judaism an '*empty shell*', designating the Jew and his culture as a "*fossil of the Syriac civilisation*". Because of the absurdity, I can still laugh about that, but the Jews cannot. The fame and scholarship of Toynbee made them feel deeply hurt by this remark. The challenge has been taken up by writers like Berkovits, Samuel and Rabinowicz, who effectively answered it.²¹⁸⁾

A predecessor of Toynbee in the phenomenological study of 'civilization' was Edward Carpenter, who founded the Fabian Society, that English bastion of extremely liberal and socialist ideas. In 1889 he published "Civilization: Its Cause and Cure", in which the first chapter refers to civilization as "*as a form of disease that human societies pass through*". The book came under unusually fierce attack from his own camp, for Carpenter held a vision beyond the narrow Marxist ideals of wages and work. "*Civilizations*", he said, "*rarely last more than a thousand years before collapsing, and no society has ever passed through 'civilization' successfully.*" And while I strongly disagree with most of Carpenter's ideas, this thought makes sense. His suggestion that the term 'civilization' has historical rather than ideal meaning is thought-provoking, and it also fits the view of us Christians, whose presumptuous pride and inflated complacency have been effectively crushed by two World Wars. Anyone who has eyes sees that our so-sung Christian civilization lies moribund.



From the introduction to the summary made by Toynbee - still a huge volume - the following strikes me, which in a way fits Carpenter's view:

«« Why study history at all? Why concern ourselves with anything beyond the range of our own time and place? At the present day there is a practical reason for taking a wider view. Within the last five hundred years, the whole face of the globe, together with its air-envelope, has been knit together physically by the amazing advance of technology, but Mankind has not yet been united politically, and we are still strangers to each other in our local ways of life, which we have inherited from the times before the recent 'annihilation of distance'. This is a terribly dangerous situation. The two World Wars and the present worldwide anxiety, frustration, tension and violence, tell the tale. Mankind is surely going to destroy itself unless it succeeds in growing together into something like a single family. For this, we must become familiar with each other; and this means becoming familiar with each other's history, since Man does not live just in the immediate present. We live in a mental time-stream, remembering the past and looking forward – with hope or with fear – to an oncoming future. »»

30.141 – Sex and Culture

Toynbee says that the inner strength of a civilization is unbeatable and that a civilization or culture dies not by murder but by suicide, but he did not specify the underlying cause

of the weakening of that inner strength or energy. In this regard, Joseph Unwin has scientifically pioneered the study of the relationship between sexual morality and the creative energy of a society. It is called "Sex and Culture", which was published by the prestigious Oxford University Press in 1934. Based on a wide range, Unwin selected 86 historical peoples, of which 16 civilized and 70 uncivilized (according to his definition in §12), covering a period of 5,000 years. After analyzing the existant reports, he concluded that there is a positive correlation between the cultural and military achievements of a people, when compared to their immediate environment, and the sexual restraint they observe. He stated that *"Any human society is free to choose either to display great energy or to enjoy sexual freedom; the evidence is that it cannot do both for more than one generation."* (p. 412) Aldous Huxley described "Sex and Culture" as *"a work of the highest importance"*,²¹⁹ and so do I, because these conclusions are mind-boggling.

"Sex and Culture" was primarily intended to test Sigmund Freud's theory (1856-1939) with regard to the impact of certain cultural expressions as a result of 'the sublimation of the primal instincts'. Civilization would be the result of repressed sexuality. According to Freud, sublimation allowed sexuality and aggression to be channeled and transformed into ambition for work, art, science, warfare, etc. Freud's testing ground first consisted of the members of the extremely regulated milieu of the "K & K" dual monarchy (Emperial & Royal) in the Vienna before the First World War. His attention turned to his patients' neuroses (a term that is no longer used), whereby their stringent sexual morals had provoked *"a morbid [c.q. pathological] response"*. But sublimation does not necessarily lead to pathological behavior and can and shall in most cases lead to a positive very powerful outward energy, and that is what Unwin discovered in the social context that we call 'culture' or 'civilization'.

Unwin had no pre-formulated thesis and, in the context of his research, avoided an opinion about right and wrong. He wanted to be unbiased. Had he known in advance where his research would lead to, he says in his foreword, he probably would never have started it. His findings surprised many scientists and Unwin not in the least, because without exception all 86 research objects confirmed that there is a direct link between monogamous societies and their *"expansive energy"*. He concluded that *"in human records there is no instance of a society retaining its energy after a complete new generation had adopted a tradition which does not insist on pre-nuptial and post-nuptial continence."* For Roman, Greek, Sumerian, Babylonian, Moorish and Anglo-Saxon civilizations, Unwin had several hundred years of history to draw on. He found without exception that these societies flourished during eras that valued sexual fidelity. Inevitably, in time, sexual mores would loosen and those societies would subsequently decline in comparison to the surrounding societies, only to rise again when they returned to more rigid standards.

The chapter on the the necessity in human affairs starts as follows: (§167, 168, 175)

«« In an absolutely monogamous society the sexual opportunity of the female is at a minimum; she is married as a virgin and must confine her sexual qualities to her husband. The sexual opportunity of the male, on the other hand, is not restrained at a minimum, for he need not confine himself to one woman. In the past, a male suffered this limitation only when a form of absolute monogamy had been adopted. In the records of history, indeed, there is no example of a society displaying great energy for any appreciable period unless it has been absolutely monogamous. Moreover, I do not know of a case in which an absolutely monogamous society has failed to display great energy. In the past,

218) "Judaism: Fossil or Ferment" by Eliëzer Berkovits # 1956; "The Professor and the Fossil" by Maurice Samuël # 1956; "Arnold Toynbee on Judaism and Zionism: A Critique" by Oskar K. Rabinowicz # 1974.

219) "Ethics" by Aldous Huxley - Chatto & Windus, London # 1946 (pp. 311-12).

specific societies have risen up in different parts of the earth, flourished greatly, and then declined. In every case the society started its historical career in a state of absolute monogamy, manifested great energy while it preserved its austere regulations, and relaxed after a less rigorous tradition had been adopted by an upcoming generation. Moreover, the political organization, which it adopted from time to time, reflected the relative energy displayed by the various social strata of which it was composed. Each [dominant] culture began as a monarchy; and any subsequent change in the identity of those which possessed the sovereign power was due to the changes in the sexual opportunity of the ruling clan or of its subjects. The existence of a monarchy depends upon two factors: first, the energy of the ruling clan; secondly, the lethargy of the subjects.²²⁰⁾ If the ruling clan dispels its [sexual] energy, or if the [expansive] energy of its subjects increases, the sovereign power is transferred to those who hitherto have accepted its rule.

Historically speaking there is no such thing as Christian marriage. The term is [in its social construct] a comprehensive one; within its scope many different types of sexual regulations have been included. Indeed, if the ideas of St Jerome, St Theodore of Tarsus, Hywel Dda (the Good) and Pope Pius XI, are to be regarded as equally Christian, all we can say is that the epithet lacks any single precise meaning. No one will dispute that in the Western Roman Empire the Christians raised the institution of marriage to a dignity which it had not known since the Roman 'confarreatio' had disappeared [sacred marriage pact for the purpose of the Vestal Virgins]; but the precise regulations adopted by the converts are not known to us. Moreover, when one by one the Teutonic nations were converted to the new religion, the sexual regulations they adopted were by no means identical. The Franks upheld the Catholic banner while their Teutonic brethren preferred the Arian type of Christianity. We know that many members of the Frankish ruling clan married more than one wife at one time; but we do not know the manner in which the acceptance of Arian Christianity affected the sexual habits of such members as the Visigoths, Vandals, and Lombards. In later days, the teaching and practice of the Catholics in the West do not appear to have been the same as those of the Orthodox Christians in the East who, indeed, have always enjoyed a greater post-nuptial sexual opportunity than their Roman Catholic brothers.

(...) When absolute monogamy is the rule, marriage is a means whereby a man secures domestic labour and heirs of his blood. A wife and her children are under the domination of her husband; in the eyes of the law, he alone is a legal object. The wife is taught to submit to her husband in all things; it is her duty to serve him and to obey him. No woman may have sexual relations with any other

220) The sexual liberation, which started in the 1960s, challenged with mounting aggression the prevailing codes of behavior related to sexuality and interpersonal relationships. It demanded unconditional acceptance of sexual intercourse outside of the traditional heterosexual, monogamous relationship. The demands for legalization of means of contraception, nudism, pornography, unbounded premarital sex, homosexuality, pedophilia, early sexualization, unrestrained self-gratification, alternative forms of procreation and sex (like bestiality), free choice of gender identity, as well as abortion provocatus, all followed. See the more than scandalous book and gigantic bestseller from 1970, that puts the movement in perspective: "The Female Eunuch" by Germaine Greer, who was fond to call herself the superwhore. If we take Unwin to the letter, the effect of the sexual liberation movement fed a substantial increase of lethargy within the general population. By the growing lack of expansive energy they became the inactive or 'silent majority' having lost the ability to think independently, which in the end has helped to make a travesty of our democracy. The disastrous dietary patterns, incorrect medication and our daily portion of stress have also contributed to popular indulgence, and not just a little!

man than with him whom she marries as a virgin. When she is married, she is not permitted to withhold conjugal rights. In an absolutely monogamous society female chastity becomes desirable for its own sake, for after a while the women accept as a point of honour the restraint imposed upon them by their lords. Over his children, also, the pater familias has complete power. In its full rigour this institution has never been tolerated for very long. Indeed all those human societies which have adopted it were constantly revising their methods of regulating the relation between the sexes. Moreover, the reforms which they introduced always conformed to the same pattern, being apparently designed to correct a state of affairs in which women and children were legal nonentities. Sometimes, as in Babylon, the changes were made by a series of separate enactments; sometimes, as in Rome, by a somewhat violent change in legal premises; but in every case they took the same course. In every case, too, the qualification of the marital and parental authorities was accompanied by the reduction of marriage to a union made and broken by mutual consent. Furthermore, in most cases the demand for pre-nuptial chastity was relaxed. In this manner the sexual opportunity of each society was extended; and as soon as a lack of compulsory continence became part of the tradition of a whole new generation, the [free available] energy of the society faded away. Sexual impulses could be satisfied in a direct manner and at will; there was no compulsory continence and consequently no [expansive] energy left.



Death of Sardanapalus by Eugène Delacroix

Sardanapalus was, according to the Greek writer Ctesias, the last king of Assyria. Diodorus says that Sardanapalus exceeded all previous rulers in sloth and luxury. He spent his whole life in self-gratification. He dressed in women's clothes and wore make-up. He had many concubines, female and male. He wrote his own epitaph, which stated that physical gratification is the only purpose of life.

It is historically right to say that in the past social energy was purchased at the price of individual freedom, for it has never been displayed unless the female of the species sacrificed her rights as an individual and unless children were treated as mere appendages to the estate of the male parent; but it would be rash to state that sexual opportunity cannot be drastically reduced under any other conditions. The evidence is that the total subjection of women and children is intolerable and therefore of a temporary nature. That there is no other way left, indeed, is contradicted by the tenor of the whole story.

(...) In my survey of the facts, I have discovered that when a society displays great social energy, it had always reduced its sexual opportunity by the adoption of absolute monogamy; moreover, that in each case the society is dominated by the group which displays the greatest relative energy; yet, as soon as the sexual opportunity of the society, or its leading group, is extended, the energy of the society, or of the group within, fades away [and its dominance terminates]. Most importantly, it should be noted that whatever the racial extraction of the people, and whatever the geographical environment in which they live, the manner in which they relax the rules of continence or self-restraint, is the same in every case.

(...) It is difficult to express any opinion with complete confidence, but as, at the end of my task, I look back along the stream of time, it seems to me that it was the unequal fate of the women, not the compulsory continence, that caused the downfall of absolute monogamy. No society has yet succeeded in regulating the relations between both genders in such a way as to enable sexual opportunity to remain at a minimum for an extended period. The inference I draw from the historical evidence is that, if ever such a result should be desired, the two genders must first be placed on a footing of complete legal equality. In the future, it seems, a human society may continue its fortuitous career, and reflect, both in its cultural behaviour and social structure, the amount [and kinds] of energy it chances to possess; but, if any society should desire to control its cultural destiny, it may do so by the adaptation of the amount of its [free dispensable] energy [via changes in the sexual opportunity pattern]. Such adaptation, by means of a decrease or increase of the [collective] energy, will appear in the third generation after the sexual opportunity has been reduced or extended. A lesser energy is easily secured, for the force of life seems to flow backwards, and the members of the society will not be slow to take advantage of any relaxation in the regulations [and social conventions]. If, on the other hand, a vigorous society wishes to display its productive energy for a long time it must recreate itself, I think, first, by placing the both genders on a level of complete legal equality, and then, by altering its economic and social organization in such a way as to render it both possible and tolerable for sexual opportunity to remain at a minimum for an extended period – and even forever. In such a case the face of the society would be set in the Direction of the Cultural Process; its inherited tradition would be continually enriched; it would achieve a higher culture than has yet been attained; by the action of preventing the decline into disorder, its tradition would be augmented and refined in a manner that surpasses our present understanding. »» [The appendix shows a new approach in the relation between man and wife.]

30.142 – The Missing Element

While the approaches of Arnold Toynbee, Edward Carpenter, Claude de Saint-Simon, Joseph Unwin, and even Karl Marx have positive sides in their perceptions of the functioning of a culture, they all have one flaw. God as a real factor is disregarded. That the rise and fall of civilizations may also have something to do with a God-given moral

order in which the family cell plays a crucial role is beyond them,²²¹⁾ except Unwin who wasn't too happy about that; he also spoke disparagingly about "*the teaching of the Galilean*". (p. 375) People prefer to think in terms of processes, class struggle and group interactions. As for Toynbee, he sees an unbridgeable chasm between God's perfection and the imperfection that manifests itself in human societies. Why God would let the devil throw a spanner in the works, according to him (and those others), is a mythical and childish representation of things. Another apostle of culture, James Frazer (1854-1941), stated that human evolution has passed through magic to religion to finally land at science. Such a view precludes any discussion.

Here we see a sharp contrast between the cultural-scientific approach and religion, especially the Christian one. What is striking in the list of great cultural philosophers is that a Christian scientist is missing, with the exception of Christopher Dawson; also that the study of culture is a fairly recent phenomenon. This is related to the Christian perspective. In the past people were convinced of the superiority of the Christian civilization, in which already now and here on earth the Millennium had taken shape, whose task was to imbue all other civilizations on earth with that 'superior' culture.²²²⁾ From this background it is understandable that no interest has ever been shown in the interaction between cultures from a Christian point of view. Evangelization naturally went hand in hand with cultural export. To a certain extent this seems inevitable, although in my opinion a little more respect could have been shown towards the personal individuality and social fabric of foreign peoples. Somewhere I read of a Protestant missionary who went to Asia with the preconceived plan to marry a local woman there in order to create a fertile mission field because of the respect thus shown for the approached culture. The support of the self-esteem of the evangelized is an absolute prerequisite for that person to embrace and practice Christian principles. How can anyone love his neighbor without loving himself first? How can a person, whose self-esteem has been reduced to zero, believe that God loves him or her in that sorry state.

I can live with the premise that eventually one world culture will remain in which the distinction between white and black will have disappeared and everyone will worship and celebrate in total agreement the divine persons of the Holy Trinity. But then we must first renounce our arrogance and have faith in the coming Reign of Peace, with an emphasis on 'coming', a reign that can only be brought into existence through God's intervention. (Rev. 19:11ff.) In Revelation 20:2, the dragon, that ancient serpent, that is, the Devil, also called Satan, is thrown into the abyss that he may no longer deceive man. This brings us to metahistorical territory.

Not only God is left out of consideration by the cultural philosophers, but also Lucifer and his terrorist gang and all the evil associated with it. Toynbee pointed to the sore spot by stating that from the Christian faith, evil in this world can only be explained by a personification of evil in the form of Satan or Lucifer. Of course, he denies the existence of Satan and he does not care about the concept of 'sin' either. The Bible, which is a high-quality scientific book of its kind, tells us otherwise. Indeed, Lucifer exists, but he was different in the beginning. He is degenerate and God has allowed it, but that does not make God or his creation, as it was in the beginning, imperfect. If a pregnant woman is addicted to alcohol, we are not surprised if the newborn suffers the consequences. There is always a prehistory, and for our discussion even a very ancient prehistory.

221) Saint-Simon, in his own words, had a warm heart for family life, but promoted a free sexual and adulterous morality within the family ties. The 'family' therefore represented nothing in his system.

222) The Western sense of superiority has led to too little self-criticism, witness the slave trade that took place without gnawing at our sense of guilt.

William Carr, a Canadian Naval Officer, says in his book from 1959, "Satan, Prince of This World" (p. 35-6):

«« God's plan of creation has placed all created things in perfect balance. Those who seek to bring the Lucifian conspiracy to its end are committed to unbalancing God's creation. And the human race [yes, all the earth] bears the burden laid upon us by the presumptuous and sinful attitude of Lucifer's henchmen.

(...) I have, as most Christians, repeated the Lord's Prayer daily since the days I could talk. (...) As a result of studying the words [of this prayer] in their relation to Satanism and the World Revolutionary Movement, I concluded that the words in an alternative English translation make more sense: "*And let us not be led into temptation, but deliver us from 'the Evil One' [Satan].*" I was pleased to discover, long afterwards, that in early Christianity both the Greek and Roman fathers, [as also expressed in] their liturgies, were strongly in favour of the masculine rather than the neutral use of the word "*a malo (evil)*". (...) I found in the New Testament, and in the texts of the Desert Fathers, that Satan, and those [who are members] of the Synagogue of Satan, exercise a general direction or superintendence over ALL evil, temporal and spiritual, which is being committed or experienced in this world. »» (pp. 35-6)

Lucifer and his demonic hosts try in a subtle way, but tenaciously, to obstruct souls from traveling along the way, pointed out by the Father and the Son and lighted up by the gifts of the Spirit. They use all their charm and art of seduction to wean humanity away from God, to the denial of God and to the cursing of God. A cursing atheist should not be possible, but yet it happens. There is also blasphemy. The worst blasphemy is that of denying the worship due to God alone by giving it to creatures and to Lucifer himself. This is why in these times (the end times) Satanism is on the rise. The Evil One tries to prevent souls from being saved and endeavors to bring to naught the redemption accomplished by Christ by means of a law which is completely opposed to that of God our Lord, who has communicated his law to us in the Ten Commandments.

The New Man

Our generation has formulated some seductively shining slogans self-fulfilment; personal freedom; liberation from the taboos of the past, from an absolute law; the new morality and situation ethics; etc. They all sound extremely progressive. And who among us and especially among us Jews living in the twentieth century, would not like to be known as a liberal. Thus, instead of setting an example for our youth, we thought that there was no safer path to the future and to a happy life, free of hangups, than to let our children lead us.

"Crisis and Faith" by Eliëzer Berkovits
Sanhedrin Press, New York # 1976

To the Lord's commandment: "*Thou shalt not have any other God but Me*", it builds false idols, before which many today prostrate themselves in adoration. Materialism and self-obsession are forms of idolatry. To the commandment: "*Thou shalt not take the Name of God in vain*", it sets itself up in opposition by blaspheming God and his Christ, in many subtle and diabolical ways, even to reducing his Name indecorously to the level of a brand-name of an object for sale and of producing sacrilegious films concerning his Life and his divine Person. To the commandment: "*Remember to keep holy the Sabbath Day*", it transforms the Sunday into a day exclusively dedicated to sports, of competitions and of entertainments. To the commandment: "*Honor thy father and thy mother*", it opposes a new model of family based on cohabitation, even between homosexuals. To the commandment: "*Thou shalt not commit impure acts*", it justifies, exalts and propa-

gates every form of impurity, even to the justification of acts against nature, and so humankind sinks ever deeper in degrading aberrations. To *"Thou shalt not kill"*, it has succeeded in legalizing abortion, in making euthanasia acceptable, and in causing respect due to the value of human life to all but disappear. To the commandment: *"Thou shalt not steal"*, it works to the end that theft, violence, kidnapping and robbery spread more and more. To *"Thou shalt not bear false witness"*, it acts in such a way that the law of deceit, lying and duplicity becomes more and more propagated until it has become on all levels of society the normal way. To the commandment: *"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife"*, it works to corrupt in the depths of the conscience, betraying the mind and the heart of man.

In this way souls become driven along the perverse and wicked road of disobedience to the divine laws, become submerged in sin and are thus prevented from receiving God's gift of grace and of the life in God. If we neglect this aspect, we will not be able to rightly assess what makes a culture strong. God's precepts were not given to trouble us, but for our salvation. When society as a whole is dragged into transgressive behaviour, civilization is in crisis and its crack of doom nigh. On the other hand, hope must never be given up, the Old Testament teaches, for when the people go into sackcloth and repent for their deeds and seek God earnestly, there is a God-led turnaround and civilization will be saved. Matthew 6:33 rightly says: *"But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."*



APPENDIX 22

Your husband shall rule over you *or: 'To flourish in love...'*

After the Fall in Paradise everything became different and God speaks to the woman (Gen. 3:16): *"I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you."* The first letter to the Corinthians 11:7-12 heightens the effect:

«« A man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God, but woman is the glory of man. For man is not from woman, but woman is from man. Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man. For this reason the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels. Nevertheless, neither is man independent of woman, nor woman independent of man, in the Lord. For as woman came from man, even so man also comes through woman; but all things are from God. »»

How, then, was it in the beginning, when the fall had not yet taken place? In Genesis 2:18 is written:

«« And the Lord God said: It is not good that man should be alone. I will make him a helper comparable to him. (and in verses 24 and 25:) Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. They were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed. »»

In the Talmud is written the following story: *"It once happened that a pious man was married to a pious woman. They arose and divorced each other. The former went and married a wicked woman, and she made him wicked, while the latter went and married a wicked man, and made him righteous. This proves that all depends on the woman."* (Bereshit Rabbah 17:7)

Not surprisingly, these verses have been applied to greatly denigrate the woman as compared to the man. These texts provided a pretext for her suppression, for it was assumed that a lower ranking also meant that the woman had been put in an inferior position. A king ranks higher, but that does not mean that his subjects are of small worth, and yet a husband is not a king over his wife and his wife is not his subject, but there exists nonetheless a distinction in ranking order. It is very common for a woman, or a man, to situate herself or himself above or below the other, to take up a dominating or dominated position. But it is much more difficult to become each other's equal, to stand upright and to continue to stand upright without fear or shame in the way things were before the Fall in Paradise (Gen. 2:25), knowing each one's worth, not feeling threatened or crushed and not seeking to crush the other.

The woman is destined to establish a position of equality with the man by being helpful to him in the sense of being available, to encourage him and to be his guardian, according to Genesis 2:18: *"she will be a helper facing him"*, and thus they should look each other in the eye, the requirement for a righteous, unselfish, thriving relationship, turned inwards but also outwards towards their family and society at large. This helpfulness is, from the Hebrew vantage point, in no way demeaning. She is not only his 'helper' in the denigrating term of the word. It has something majestic. In this manner we talk about

God: *"He is to us our help and shield"* (paraphrase of Ps. 115:9-11) From this text we may confidently conclude that the wife has tutelage over her husband. My dictionary states under tutelar: "guardian, defender, protector or keeper, a person who takes care of the interests of children, a supervisor". Without her care many a man would not be able to keep going nor to fulfil the tasks he is called on to perform. The psychological power of the woman over the man should not be underestimated. Weaker in muscular power, she is often the strongest psychologically and holds the subtle power to guide and encourage him. She is therefore the guardian of the plant and at the same time its fertiliser. So her mission with the man remains of the utmost importance. She is described in this sense in the Old Testament (Prov. 31:10-31). The first three verses of this song of praise go as follows: *"Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies. The heart of her husband safely trusts her, so he will have no lack of gain. She does him good and not evil, all the days of her life."* The subsequent verses praise her great industriousness and her talents of organization, which positions her more as a helper in the meaning of stewardship.

Prayer for Loved Ones

Lord, You who wants that we should be one life, united by one and the same ideal, give strength and courage to our weak powers, our eyes light and purity, our thoughts nobility and confidence. Let us always remain united in our word through Yours.

Be our protector, our refuge and our comfort. Never let the desire for knowing the beauty that resides in the other diminish. Bless our unity Lord, in every moment of our day, bless our thoughts, our desires, our feelings. Bless our allegiance to one another and protect us, so that we'll never turn from You and never from each other. Amen

Prayer given by Erik De Rynck (†) to his beloved Helena

A remark is in order here. Because of the Fall, a terrible imbalance came into being in the original unity of the man and woman; the latter, suddenly deprived of the loving attention and presence of the Father, turned to Adam expecting everything from him, from him who experienced this obligation as an unbearable burden, from him who had also become slave to sin and was no longer capable of fulfilling the task. Her adoration destined the woman to be dominated in the terrible meaning of the word, or to dominate in her struggle away from it. This is the verdict of their situation (Gen. 3:16): *"Your desire shall be for your husband and he shall rule over you."* That situation, which is a curse where the man abuses his position to exploit the woman and to force her into subjugation, also indicates the trials both have to go through to find again the blessing of the Father and to discover the true meaning of ruling over on the one hand and to go along with on the other, according to the letter to the Ephesians 5:22-31:

«« For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her [in accepting the tortuous death on the Cross], that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word. ...So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it. »»

By turning to God, both man and woman discover who they really are meant to be, ready to be filled with His Love in order to attain the true liberating equality where they again find unity with one another, in accordance with the task assigned to them by God. To

preclude any misunderstanding I stress once more that this equality does not imply being identical to each other in the sphere of competition or rivalry, because that would deprive their unification of its splendour. The unification is no simple addition but a fulfilment or whole-making of the man and conversely a whole-making of the woman, a mutual contribution for the attainment of the objective for which they were both created. The task and struggle is to change the 'inside' contradictions, at war with each other, into unity-lovingness. Then only will the common condition be met for unity-lovingness with 'one another'. Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179), a psychologist before the term existed, was long ago of the opinion that "*the work of the one through the other*" (opus alterum per alterum) facilitates the discovery and recognition of the inner femininity of the man, as it does equally vis-à-vis the inner masculinity of the woman.



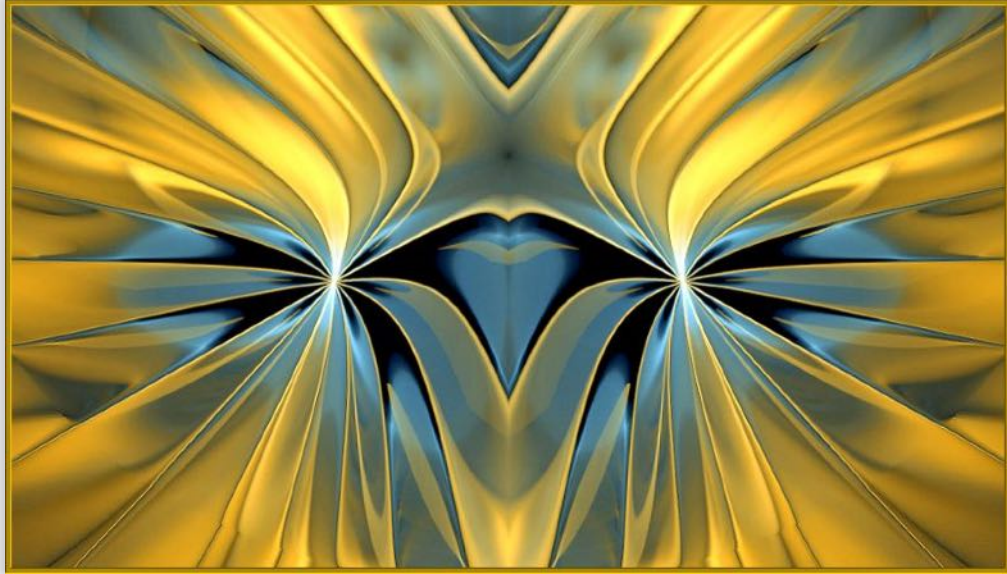
Photo by Niki Sanders on Unsplash

In the process of growing towards each other in a step by step approach of the unity envisaged by God, it requires from both partners an effort and sacrifice - sometimes an heroic sacrifice - but for its reward one does not need to wait for the hereafter, because God's blessing does not remain absent. By giving one shall receive, but in a way different from that to which people are accustomed in this short-sighted and opportunistic society. It takes time, a time often not allowed for... Perhaps a more appropriate title for this article should have been: **"To flourish in love."** True enough!



‘Hear O Israel ...our God is one!’

Trinitarian Thought as from Old Testamentic Times



The Tri-Une God (original design by Exper)

This contribution explores the concept of the Holy Trinity, particularly its potential presence and understanding within Judaism and its relationship to Christian doctrine. It examines the Sh'ma prayer – a central Jewish tenet emphasizing God's oneness – in light of Trinitarian ideas, positing that the Hebrew word for 'one' allows for a combinative unity. The sources discuss scriptural interpretations from both the Old and New Testaments, alongside historical deliberations from Jewish and Christian scholars, discussing whether the Trinity represented a known or developing concept in ancient Jewish thought. Furthermore, the texts address the significance of Jesus' Name according to the Hebrew way of spelling and ascertain the historical evolution of the doctrine of Holy Trinity within Christianity. It concludes with a discussion on the deeper meaning of unity and love in relation to the divine.

31.143 – The Principle

The Sh'ma is perhaps the best known Jewish prayer: “Hear, O Israel: the Lord is our God, the Lord alone!” (שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד) (Deut. 6:4), prayed with the right hand in front of the eyes. Actually it is not a prayer but constitutes the central Jewish confession of faith, whereby, just as in the Islam's central confession of faith, the unicity of God is declared, as revealed to Moses, which is against the notion of Trinity (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) as professed by the Christians. This verse, quoted over and over again, is followed in the next verse by the Bible's greatest commandment: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your strength!” The simplistic approach assumes that the Sh'ma taught the new people that there is but one God, thereby rejecting the polytheism of the surrounding peoples, but in fact it is a call to adore God and God alone, the one God who, in the midst of fire and thick smoke, had revealed Himself at the Sinai (Deut. 5:22), the one God who is much more powerful than the gods of neighbouring peoples. Yes, happy is the people that has Yahweh as its Lord! (Ps. 33:10-12)

The beginning of the Sh'ma synagogue prayer, based on Deuteronomium 6:4, goes as follows: "*Sh'ma Isra'el, Adonai eloheynu, Adonai echad.*": "**Hear O Isra'el: the Lord is our God, the Lord is One!**", with the addition: "*Blessed be the NAME of his glorious Kingdom for ever and ever.*" Next, verses 5 t/m 9 are quoted:

«« You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. These words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as **tefillin** on your hand, and they shall be as **frontlets** between your eyes. You shall affix the **mezuzahs** to the doorposts of your house and on your gates. (Then it continues with chapter 11:13-21) It shall come to pass if you surely listen to the commandments that I command you today to love HaShem (the Name) and to serve him with all your heart and all your soul, that I will give rain to your land, the early and the late rains, that you may gather in your grain, your wine and your oil. And I will send grass in your fields for your livestock, that you may eat and be filled. Take heed to yourselves, lest your heart be deceived, if you turn aside and serve other gods and worship them: then the anger of HaSHEM will blaze against you and shut up the heavens so that there be no rain, and the land will not give its fullness, and you will perish quickly from the good land the Lord is giving you. Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and bind them as **tefillin** on your hand, and they shall be as **frontlets** between your eyes. You shall teach them your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall affix the **mezuzahs** to the doorposts of your house and on your gates, in order to prolong your days and the days of your children on the land that the Lord Lord swore to your fathers to give them, for as long as the days that the heavens are over the earth. »»

The Sh'ma synagogue prayer ends with the praying of Numbers 15:37-41:

«« HaSHEM spoke to Moses: Speak to the children of Israel that they make **tzitzit** (fringes) on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and to put a blue thread in the fringes of the corners. Those fringes will be a sign to you that you may look upon them and remember all the commandments of HaSHEM and do them and not follow after your heart and after your eyes which lead astray, and that you may remember and do all my commandments and be holy before your God. I am HaSHEM, your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be a God to you: I am HaSHEM your God. This is the truth. »»

It is a known fact that Islam, that took root in Israel's brother-people (both have Abraham as their father), adopted a number of important elements from the Jewish faith. It can hardly be a coincidence that in Islam, just as in the Jewish faith, the central confession of faith rests on the oneness of God, as expressed in Sura 112 (which is 'their' Sh'ma): "**In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. Proclaim: He is the One (in Koranic Arabic: *ahad*) and Only GOD. The Absolute GOD. Never did He beget, nor was He begotten. None equals Him.**" ²²³⁾

Although the notion of the Trinity was, in Jesus' time, not altogether unfamiliar in the Jewish religion, but once the high priests had rejected Jesus as their Messiah any reference to it was banned, a development to be regretted and one of which, in fact, Islam was the victim. Although Islam shares with Christianity the belief in the Virgin Birth of

223) The majority opinion assumes that Sura 112 originated in the Meccan period, when Mohammed was still on friendly terms with the Jews and thus he could have become acquainted with the Sh'ma.

Jesus (Sura 3:42) and believes that He will pass the final judgement and, in addition, in contrast to their prophet Mohammed, that Jesus is without sin, the notion of trinity remains a massive obstacle to peaceful coexistence between the Christian and Muslim peoples. Sura 112 states that God is neither begotten nor has begotten. The usual interpretation of it is that the idea of trinity is blasphemous!

But the Christians too state that God has never begotten children in the manner usual to humans, since according to Christian doctrine Jesus and the Holy Spirit have always existed and thus Christian belief speaks of the already existing Word that became flesh at a certain point in time, that same Word that was already with God 'and' was God before revealing Himself in this way (Jn. 1). Mary's son can, in human terms, have come into existence, but the way it happened was different. The Saviour of the human race was not begotten in the way usual to human beings. In Jesus Christ, when He walked on earth, the divine and human natures together constituted a single person. During the 'incarnation' these two natures were united, 'made one', in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary. In human conception there is, of course, no question of incarnation, which is why Psalm 85:11 speaks of "*Truth shall **spring out** of the earth*". This fits Jesus who is sometimes called the **Scion** or **Root of Jesse** (Is. 11:10). That cannot be seen separately from Psalm 67:6: "*The earth shall yield her increase; God, our own God, shall bless us.*" See also Psalm 2:7: "*The Lord said to Me: You are my Son, today I have begotten You.*" 'Today' is the eternal in the eternal present time: "I am who is".

We can hardly continue to state that these references are only possible because – as Islam claims – the Jews have falsified the Bible, for they also happen to be a stumbling block for the Jews as the texts clearly refer to the Saviour and Hope of Israel who has already come, He whom they have refused to recognise. The Islamic writings repeatedly say that both Jews and Christians have falsified the Bible in order to discredit Mohammed as prophet. The accusation, as concerns the Old Testament, does not appear to be completely baseless: due to the alternatives that the original Hebrew offers – at the time there were no vowels nor spaces between words – it was possible in the period following Jesus' crucifixion to play around with the Sacred Texts in order to keep his predicted coming more concealed. This playing around was sufficiently well known and therefore the Christian Church has always preferred the Greek Septuagint (dating from the 3rd and the 2nd century BC) as also the Latin Vulgate translation of Holy Script, which dates from the 5th century AD, having borrowed a great deal from the Septuagint. Since then, the Vulgate has been accepted as the standard Bible translation in a time when many were versed in Latin. Yet Jewish experts in Scripture, who were converted to Christianity, have always shown a preference for the Septuagint. Since the Vulgate and the New Testament had long been fixed and were widely spread before the birth of Mohammed, around 570 AD, the accusation of falsification, made by Islam, is plucked out of thin air, but it does constitute an obstacle in the conversion of Muslims to Christianity.



Mezuzahs, to be fixed to doorposts and containing a text.

31.144 – God in Plural Form

It is a remarkable fact that in Deuteronomy 6:4 the Hebrew word for ‘God’ has the plural form derived from **Elohim**, which, in the Bible, is the most common form for God (2500x), also translated as Lord. Elohim is used in Exodus 20:3: “*You shall have no other gods before me*”. In 1 Kings 11:5 & 33 Elohim is even translated as Astarte, which is understandable considering that the Bible uses the title Elohim 217x in relation to idols. The fact that a singular form of the verb is used in Deuteronomy 6:4 is not an argument in favour of seeing this as a rejection of polytheism, since in Psalm 58:11 we read literally: “*Surely, there is one God, ‘they’ judge the earth.*” Incidentally, in Genesis 1:26 we read: “*Let Us make man in our image, according to our likeness*”, with a footnote in the Dutch Canisius translation (1955): “*Many Church Fathers and later writers see in this an indication of the Mystery of the Holy Trinity*”. The Jewish Biblical scholars stumbled over the same interpretation, awkward for them, as witness their commentary in the Midrash Rabbah.

It is further remarkable that the Sh’ma mentions God three times as **Yahweh** is our **Elohim**, **Yahweh** alone. At the beginning of Psalm 50 this is erroneously rendered in some translations as “*The God of gods, the Lord*”, but it should be something like “The God, the Three-One, the Lord” (El, Elohim, Yahweh). This matches the Sh’ma and constitutes the logical follow-up in Psalm 50.

An alternative for Elohim was available in the original Hebrew. There was no need to use Elohim in this verse in Deuteronomy. The singular form for God, **Eloah**, still occurs 250 times in the Bible, as in Deut. 32:15: “*Then he forsook God who made him, and scornfully esteemed the Rock of his salvation*”.

Of interest is the Biblical use of Adoniam, that appears 432x and is used exclusively for the Creator. It means ‘my Adoniam’, or: my Lord who owns me. The title was used originally as a common term of address, but served to emphasize by Whom the prophets were speaking in the salutation: “*Thus speaks Adonai Jahweh*”.

The Big Bang is and remains a Secondary Cause

The Big Bang is the popular name for the assumption that the Universe originated from a single point (singularity) some 17 billion years ago. This assumption is based on a calculation backwards of the ever expanding universe as if we are faced with an explosion that has not yet come to its end. The Einstein’s cosmological constant was introduced in the theory of relativity to compensate for the accelerating expansion of the universe. The formulas only become complete after the introduction of a second one, the Sakharov cosmological constant, in order to compensate for the variability of natural constants, and then the Big Bang turns out to be a miscalculation. In reality, the point zero, in an infinitely smaller exponential series, is never reached. By the way, in explaining the origin of the universe, the Big Bang is a circular reasoning, because a material thing can never be the underlying cause of the material. Even a Big Bang is and remains a secondary cause. If we live by the commandment to love God, it follows that the Big Bang cannot explain the origin of the universe, for how could we ever love the Big Bang?

31.145 – One is a Combinative Unit

Finally, I would point out that the word for one (**ichud** or **echad**) allows for a combinative unit – something that is characteristic of the Trinity – as shown in the passages Genesis 1:5; 2:24; Ezra 2:64 and Ezekiel 37:17. In these places the unity is the consequence of

combining evening and morning, man and woman, the individual members of an association and two sticks placed together. Hebrew has a separate word for undivided unity: **yachid**; but the saintly writer did not wish to use this for the Sh'ma. The great biblical scholar Maimonides, who lived in the 12th century AD, nonetheless used yachid for his **thirteen articles of faith** in stark contrast to the original text by which he wanted to indicate that God is 'indivisible' One. The word yachid exclusively represents a singular unity. He thus deviated from the Biblical canon and from his own Jewish tradition such as found in the Zohar, where the notion of the Trinity is often and frankly expressed.

It is generally assumed that the Zohar is the earliest known record of the oral tradition based on a direct revelation of God to Abraham and afterwards to Moses. The book is of a much earlier date than is commonly pretended. Is that to discredit the Trinity idea? According to Le Chevalier Paul Drach (David), who until then had a certain fame among his fellow Jews, and converted to the Roman Catholic faith in 1823, the written text undoubtedly dates from the beginning of the second century of our era, which would be evident from the archaic language used (not pure Hebrew). Aryeh Kaplan was also convinced of the great antiquity of the Zohar.²²⁴⁾ According to Wikipedia under "Zohar" (March 14, 2011), the majority of orthodox Judaism believes that the teachings of the Kabbalah were transmitted orally from teacher to teacher, in a long and continuous chain, from the Biblical era until its redaction, amongst others, in books like the Zohar, in this instance written down by Shimon ben Yochai, who lived about the late first and early second centuries

Our attention is drawn particularly to the second and third articles of this frequently recited thirteen articles of faith devised by Maimonid:

«« I believe with complete faith that the Creator, blessed be his NAME, is unique (yachid), and there is no uniqueness like His in any way, and that He alone is our God, Who was, Who is, and Who will be. I believe with complete faith that the Creator, blessed be his NAME, is not physical, and is not affected by physical phenomena, and that there is no comparison whatsoever to Him. »»

The Shacharit, the morning prayer with its twice thirteen verses, goes a little further. It is based on the thirteen articles of faith drawn up by Maimonides: *"Exalted be the living God and praised. He is the One and there is no oneness like his Uniqueness. He has no image or body nor is He a body."*

It is remarkable that these articles of faith speak of *"God Who was and Who is and Who is to come"*, a reference to Exodus 3:14: *"God spoke to Moses: 'I am that I am!' [comprising the three tenses of past, present and future]. And He continued: Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: 'I AM has sent me to you!'"* According to the Jewish interpretation, it also refers to Isaiah 6:3: *"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts!"* And yet Petrus Galatinus († ca.1539), who belonged to a Catholic religious order, the Friar Minors, in his time still had access to the (rare) Targum on the hagiographies of Rabbi Jonathan ben Uziel, a contemporary of Jesus, in which he could read next to that specific verse the following paraphrase: *"Holy the Father, holy the Son, holy the Holy Spirit."*²²⁵⁾ If he had access to it, Maimonides ought to have had access to it as well.

224) Aryeh Moshe Eliyahu Kaplan (1934-83) proved that the Zohar was written by Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, who lived at around 200 AD, a proof based on "Otzar Ha-Chaim" written by Rabbi Yitzchok deMin Acco. The first time Kaplan discussed his findings in a public forum was during a lecture to the Association of Orthodox Jewish Scientists (AOJS - New York State) on Febr. 18, 1979 on the topic of "Kabbalah and the Age of the Universe" (p. 17).

225) Paul Drach: "De l'harmonie entre l'église et la synagogue" (pp. 190-91), referenced to: "De arcanis catholicoe veritatis" (Vol. 2, ch. 1).

What does the Bible say about the Holy Trinity?

The Song of Moses refers to God as the Father of Israel, as the one who bought them, made them, and established them. (Ex. 4:22, Deut. 32:6) This verse does not show the affective relationship related to the word father. Emphasis is placed on God the Father as our creator and ruler. The truly fatherly and emotionally charged relation only starts with King David, who tells that God is a father of the fatherless and a defender of widows. He cries out to Him: *"You are my Father!"* (Ps. 68:5, 89:26) That is how God revealed himself when the Davidic covenant was established, saying: *"I am his Father, and he is my son (...) and my mercy shall never depart from him."* (2 Sam. 7:14-15)

The compassionate relation between God and us takes precedence when Jesus starts his messianic mission; then also the Divine Tri-Unity becomes clearer. There is not much evidence in the New Testament that God the Father is totally distinct from God the Son. Where John says that the Word (or Son) *"was God"*, he also says that the Word *"was with God"*. (John 1:1) The Apostle thus differentiates the Son from the Father. They are not just alternative names for the same God, showing different ways in which the one God operates and reveals himself, either at different points in history or at the same time.

From Jesus it is said that He is our advocate before the Father and also his priest (1 John 2:1, Hebr. 7:24), which implies a distinction between them as real persons. Moreover, Jesus' experience of the Father and his prayer to Him (e.g. John 12:28) makes no sense if they are not different individuals; in effect He would be conversing with Himself, which is on a different level than a prayer.

In the Old Testament the Spirit is not distinguished as a person in his own right, who operates independently from the Father, unless in Proverbs 8:22-30.²²⁶ But in the New Testament that becomes different: the Spirit is distinguished from the Father (Rom. 8:27), and He is said to engage in a range of personal activities, including speaking (Acts 8:29), bearing witness (Rom. 8:16), forbidding certain actions (Acts 16:6-7) and approving others (Acts 15:28), being grieved (Eph. 4:30), and deciding the distribution of gifts (1 Cor. 12:11). And although the Greek word for 'Spirit' is neuter, He is denoted by masculine pronouns in John 15:26 and 16:13-14, which also points to his individual status.

The Son and the Spirit are explicitly distinguished from each other (Jn 14:26, 16:7). Jesus is anointed by the Spirit (Luke 4:18), speaks of the Spirit as someone distinct from Himself (Mt. 12:32) and breathes the Spirit on the disciples (John 20:22). The relationship between the three persons is one of activity and agency. The Father carries out the work of creation and redemption in the Son and by the Spirit (Col. 1:15-20, Rom. 8:3-4). And thus He can be said 'to send' the Son (Gal. 4:4) and the Spirit (John 14:26) in order to accomplish his purposes. The Son also fulfils his work through the Spirit (Acts 10:38), and He too is said 'to send' the Spirit (John 16:7).

Excerpt from the May/June 2012 magazine of "Barnabas Aid"

31.146 – Love the Lord thy God!

It should be clear from the foregoing that the Sh'ma is not actually an appeal, as the Jews state, to believe in the One non-compound God, but rather a call to serve only the God of Abraham and no other. This cannot be separated from the next verse (included in the Sh'ma), which states that we should love God with all our heart. Love God! That's the most important, said Jesus, referring to this commandment. (Mk 12:28-30)

We may therefore conclude that at the time the **Sh'ma is more a monolatric than a monotheistic commandment**. In the time of Moses monolatry was very common. Many cities and peoples had their own god. Thus it was not a new idea that exclusively one god, in this case the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, should be adored and no other. But the absolute and universal character of the call was indeed new, with the only limitation that in the beginning this applied only to the people of Israel, the people chosen by God from among all the peoples of the world, who from now on were his personal possession. It should be pointed out that at the stage Moses received his revelation the common people was not ready to seize the notion of trinity, though it does lie concealed within the new idea.²²⁷⁾

31.147 – The Blessed Trinity was not a New Doctrine

Despite the fact that Sh'ma was originally a monolatric commandment, monotheism is not far from it, at least for the people God addressed. In contrast to the other peoples of the earth, **Abraham and his descendants lived not for their own existence but for the foundation of their existence**, for Him through whom their existence came into being. And, indeed, there can be only one cause, one principle, one point of departure. This constitutes the core of monotheism, a concept that matches up with the verse following the Sh'ma (verse 5): ***“You shall love the Lord thy God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.”*** This addition removes from monotheism any reprehensible and purely intellectual approach.

We may compare the Sh'ma with the monogamous marriage (one partner, no other), and the call “Love the Lord thy God” with the marriage vow of everlasting fidelity and devotion. In this sense marriage is an exercise in our relationship with God. Not without reason Jesus named the just quoted fifth-verse-commandment as the most important in the Bible, the one on which the entire law and the prophets depend (Mt. 22:34-40). It is the connection of the standing opposite one another in the duality of marriage, as a reflection of the divine (combinative) oneness, from which through time the fruit reveals itself as divine sparks in many facets. And because true love is a reflection of divine Love, if such love is pursued in the experience between people, a connection will be made with the One from whom everything and everyone originated and whose image-bearer we are meant to be, image-bearer of God in this hitherto broken world.

To conclude, I would now like to quote from the writings by the aforementioned Paul Drach, the aspiring Chief Rabbi of Paris:

«« The doctrine of the divine Trinity, that is, of three distinct [though not separated] Persons of the Divinity and, at the same time, united in the most

226) Proverbs 8:22-33: “Jahweh possessed Me at the beginning of his way, before any of his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, ere He made the Earth. When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills, I was brought forth, while as yet He had not made the Earth and its fields, or the primeval dust of the universe. When He prepared the heavens, I was there, when He drew a circle on the face of the deep, when He established the clouds above, when He strengthened the fountains of the deep, when He assigned to the sea its limit so that the waters would not transgress his command. When He appointed the foundations of the Earth I was beside Him as his most beloved son, I was daily his delight, all the time I frolicked before his eyes, playing on his globe, and my delights were with the sons of men.”

227) Exodus 20:3 reads in Hebrew: “Lo yihe'yu lecha Elohim achei'rim (singular masculine) le-fan'ai”, of which the correct translation goes: “There shall not be for you another God (projected) upon my face”, stated differently: “whom you worship in my place”. This agrees with Exodus 34:14: “You shall worship no other god: for Jahwe, whose name is Jealous, He is a jealous God.”

absolute union possible, in the single and indivisible eternal Essence, had always been accepted in the ancient synagogue. When our Lord Jesus Christ gave to his disciples, who were all chosen from among the Jews, the mission to go and preach his holy Gospel to the peoples of the earth, he commanded them to baptize **in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit** (Mt. 28:19). These words, the only words in the four Gospels whereby the three divine Persons are named together and in such deliberate terms, were clearly spoken not with the object of revealing the Holy Trinity. When the Saviour pronounced here the adorable names of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, it was to prescribe the sacramental formula for baptism. The ‘naming’ of the great mystery in this context, ‘on the occasion’ of baptism, produces in the mind of whoever reads the Gospel the effect of an article of faith already known and completely accepted among the children of Israel. And so, in the four Gospels that we possess, we do not see any ‘new revelation’ of the Holy Trinity, fundamental point and pivot of the whole of the Christian religion, but rather the statement of a doctrine like all others already taught in the synagogue during the time of Christ: such as, for instance, Original Sin [in Hebrew the *Jetzer ha-ra*], the creation of the world without pre-existing matter, the existence of God.

Where, in other places, our Lord distinguishes between the Father and the Son, while teaching that they are but One – John 10:30: *“I and the Father are One”* – it is only in order to proclaim that his sacred person is the Son. If it had been a question of teaching – as if it were a truth as yet unknown – that three Persons constitute the unity of God, the divine Teacher would certainly not have neglected to refer to the Holy Spirit, who necessarily proceeds from the Father and the Son. He would have said: *“I and the Father and the Spirit are One”*. The same is the case in the witness given in the Gospel of John 14:16 and 15:26. Here, where the three divine persons are mentioned, it is ‘on the occasion’ of the sending of the ‘Comforter’, the Spirit of Truth. We can say the same of the Holy Spirit in particular. Several texts in the Gospels speak of this Person, but none constitute a revelation.

On the occasion of our Lord’s baptism, the third person is presented along with the Father and the Son, but only to give an account of what transpired during this event. The Spirit is presented as already known and adored as God. Thirty years before the preaching of the Gospel began, the application of the Mosaic Law was still in full swing when the angel spoke to the pious Joseph: *“That which is conceived in Mary your wife is of the Holy Spirit”*, but Joseph did not ask: *“What is the Holy Spirit?”* – unlike Pharaoh who asked Moses: *“Who is Yahweh? I do not know this Yahweh.”* (Ex. 5:2)

In short, the evangelists use the mystery of the Incarnation of God as the starting point of their narration. They tell it and expect us to believe it. As for the knowledge of the mystery of the Trinity, which existed already and constitutes the foundation of the [Christian] faith, they appropriate it as a foregone conclusion that was included in the faith of the old law. That explains why they never say: *“Know well and ye believe”* that there are three Persons in God. Indeed, those who are acquainted with what the early scribes of the synagogue taught, I mean those who lived before the coming of the Saviour, they surely knew that the Trinity in the One God was an accepted truth to them and that from the earliest times. »» (‘De l’harmonie entre l’église et la synagogue’, pp. 277-80)

Drach states: *“The naming of the great mystery in this context (...) produces the effect of an article of faith already known and completely accepted among the children of Israel.”* I must assume that this was a familiar proposition then, but this in no way proves that it was accepted, certainly not among the general population. If that had been the case, the scribes could not have disproved it so easily in the Talmud, written some time

later. In “God’s witness to His Little Souls” J.N.S.R. wrote on 25th December 2008 (J.N.S.R. writes only under these initials) that the divine NAME (as a trinity) was already known to the patriarchs but that from 270 BC this knowledge was steadily pushed away and that this process was completed by the time of the death of Simeon the Just, mentioned in Luke 2:25-35. J.N.S.R. also writes that pushing the knowledge away of the divine Trinity represented an attempt to please the people, who had become extremely monotheistic and were incapable to accept that the Messiah should find Himself in the Almighty Father, whose NAME, the tetragrammaton (yod, he, waw, he), is pronounced Yehoshua or Yeshua (Jesus) after having placed the letter shin (our ‘s’) in its middle (yod, he, **shin**, waw he), which illustrates the fact that God had become man. We may say that in Jesus’ time the Holy Trinity was known within certain Jewish circles though not really accepted – by way of contrast to what the first Christians believed in.

Scriptural Proof for the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity

Some of the early Church Fathers and even some later theologians, disregarding the progressive character of God’s revelation, gave the impression that the doctrine of the Trinity was completely revealed in the Old Testament. On the other hand, some Christian sects were of the opinion (which is shared by modern Jews) that it is not found there at all. Both were mistaken. The Old Testament does not contain a full revelation of the trinitarian existence of God, but does contain several indications of it. And this is exactly what might be expected. The Bible never deals with the doctrine of the Trinity as an abstract truth, but reveals the trinitarian life in its various relations as a living reality, to a certain extent in connection with the works of creation and [the divine] providence, but particularly in relation to the work of redemption.

Its most fundamental revelation is rather given in facts than in words. And this revelation increases in clarity in the measure in which the redemptive work of God is more clearly revealed, as in the incarnation of the Son and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. And the more the glorious reality of the Trinity stands out in the facts of history, the clearer the statements of the doctrine become. The fuller revelation of the Trinity in the New Testament is due to the fact that the Word became flesh, and that the Holy Spirit took up his abode in the Church.

“Systematic Theology” by Louis Berkhof
Grand Rapids, Michigan # 1932, revised ed. 1938 (VIII.B-2a)

Irenaeus of Lyons (ca 140- ca 202) is the first Church Father who in his writings opposed Christian gnosticism (a mixture of Christendom and paganism). He considered it harmful that this perfidious doctrine denies a number of essential facts of salvation, like the incarnation of God and the ensuing theology of the Trinity. Going back to an earlier stage we already possess a valuable document that expresses the fact that the first Christians believed in the divinity of Jesus: Pliny the Younger was the imperial legate in Bithynia and Pontus, situated at the Black Sea, adjacent to the region where the Apostle Paul preached, and where his teachings were kept in their original form (1st century). He wrote a letter in the year 112 AD to Emperor Trajan in which he explains that Christians are a large crowd of every age and rank, not only in the cities but even in the villages and farms. After thorough investigation in the context of his condemnation of this “*contagious superstition (superstitionis istius contagio)*”, he discovers “*that they were accustomed to meet on a fixed day before dawn and sing responsively a hymn to Christ as to a god (quod essent soliti stato die ante lucem convenire carmenque Christo quasi deo), and they use to bind themselves by oath, not to some crime, ...but not to commit fraud, theft, or adultery, nor falsify their trust.*” Pliny is a trustworthy source, who understood the art of writing and had a keen eye for detail. We have also the imperial answer. (Letters 10:96, 97) One victim from this period was Simeon, who in Acts 13:1 is called

Niger. He was the son of Mary of Klopas, who was standing at the foot of the Cross. As bishop of Jerusalem he was crucified under Trajan at the age of 121 after having suffered terrible tortures. Klopas was the brother of the father in law of Jesus and may therefore be called Jesus' uncle.²²⁸⁾ We may assume that in this epoq their doctrine closely followed the convictions of the early Christians. Simeon will have watched over that. And therefore, Pliny's remark that people worshipped Christ as God is significant.

Co-eternal, He is the only-begotten and perfect Son

The divine Word, St Thomas Aquinas wrote, measures up to the power of God, because by his essence He understands himself and everything else. So the Word He conceives by his essence, when He understands himself and everything else, is as great as his essence. It is therefore perfect, simple and equal to God. We call this Word of God a Son, because He is of the same nature with the Father, and we profess that He is co-eternal with the Father, only-begotten and perfect. (...) We do not say that the three divine persons or hypostases are distinct by essence. (...) Since the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit are not distinct in their divine nature, but only by relationship, we are right in saying that the three persons are not three gods, but one true and perfect God.

If a man, conscious of his weakness, was promised to receive perfect happiness, (...) he could hardly hope for it unless he were shown the dignity of human nature in some other way, namely, that God valued it so highly that He deigned to become man for his salvation. This is why God's incarnation gave us hope that in the end a human can be united with God in blissful joy.

Thomas Aquinas: "De rationibus fidei contra Saracenos, Graecos et Armenos ad Cantorem Antiochenum" (Ch. 3-5)

31.148 – How Jesus' Name is written in Hebrew

There are different spellings of 'Jesus'. For our Saviour the usual way in Hebrew is 'Joshua' (yod, he, **shin**, waw he), as explained already. This name also designates the man who led the people of Israel in the conquest of the Promised Land. This one, 'Jehoshua', is written a bit differently: "yod, he, waw, **shin**, waw, ayin", or alternatively as "yod, he, waw, **shin**, ayin", pronounced as Yeshua/ Joshua or Josua. In Greek it is written as Jesus (Ἰησοῦς) - yes indeed - as shown in Hebrews 4:8 and Acts 7:45, the same spelling as for our beloved Saviour. From this it is abundantly clear that Joshua, son of Nun, must be regarded as an image of the coming one. Joshua's name was originally Oshea. By adding the letter yod at the beginning of that name, it becomes Yoshua. The same yod added to Nun (his father) makes Yinnon, which Psalm 72:17 uses as title of the Messiah, where it means something like 'shall endure': "*His NAME shall endure forever; his NAME shall continue as long as the sun exists. And men shall be blessed in Him; all nations shall call Him blessed.*"



Joshua, the leader in the conquest of the Promised Land

Because the name Jesus/Yehoshua is a conjugation of the tetragrammaton (JHWH, pronounced Yahweh) with in its middle the letter shin, the name Joshua/Yeshua (with ayin at the end) is to be considered a concealment of the messiah. Woe betide him who should

228) Taken from "A Dictionary of Early Christian Biography", edited by Henry Wace & William C. Piercy # 1911 (under heading: Simeon 2nd bp. Jerusalem).

write his own forename that includes the complete tetragrammaton. In Matthew lacks the last letter of the tetragrammaton. In Hebrew that is: 'Mattithyah', or "Gift of JHW". The classic Hebrew name for Jesus, used as an ordinary forename, starts with the first three letters of the tetragrammaton, then the letter shin and then two other letters ending with the letter ayin (Strong's 3091, see image). This is the usual way to place the name of Yahweh in a person's name, such as in Joseph, though with two different final letters (Strong's 3084), where, just as with the name Jesus, it means "God saves". The only exception to the practice of using a part of the Yahweh name for a normal person's name exists in Judah or Jehuda: by adding an extra letter in the NAME, the 'dalet', we get five letters (yod, hè, waw, **dalet**, hè), which reads as Jehuda. Patriarch Judah, who is the ancestor of Jesus, represents the door (dalet) through which the divine entered our human condition. That has really taken place in Jesus Christ, in Whom the natural and the supreme being are One.

The principle of subsidiarity does not detract from Jesus' divinity

One reader has suggested that Jesus Christ cannot be God because He is not omniscient and omnipotent. After all, when Jesus Christ spoke of the Day of Judgment, He said: *"But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father."* (Mk 13:32, Mt. 24:36) One of God's attributes is that He knows everything, right? His knowledge is unlimited. That his Son, as He says of Himself, did not know when the Day of Judgment is coming would be the clearest evidence that Jesus Christ is not omniscient and therefore cannot be God. Regarding the attribute of omnipotence, the reader pointed to John 5:19 and 5:30: *"Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do"*, but also: *"I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and my judgment is righteous, because I do not seek my own will but the will of the Father who sent Me."*

Indeed, this shows that Jesus Christ is in some respects subject to the Father. However, that the Father knows more than Jesus Christ, whose power is united with the Father, does not mean that He is inferior. The Catechism of the Catholic Church of 1992 says in this matter (nr. 255): *"The divine persons are relative to one another. Because it does not divide the divine unity, the real distinction of the persons from one another resides solely in the relationships which relate them to one another."*

The principle of subsidiarity (a division of tasks) does not contradict omnipotence. Otherwise there would be no different 'personalities' within the Holy Trinity: Jesus Christ does things from the Father because they are completely One and He does not know everything because the Father hides it from Him in apparent complete mutual agreement that fits the division of tasks. This is called 'a compound cause' in theology, and therefore the two - the Father and the Son - are completely ONE, as confirmed by John the Evangelist. (John 10:30) Therefore, whoever does not honor the Son 'as' the Father, does not honor the Father!!! (John 5:23) The saying from Matthew 11:27 also fits here: *"No one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him."*

Incidentally, in the Cabbalistic literature the name of Jehoshua is usually written with the tetragrammaton and the shin in its middle, but there the shin is ascribed to the 'hissing' snake and all kinds of bizar and blasphemous conclusions are drawn from it, apparently to avoid having to believe in Jesus Christ. In Luke 10:18 Jesus says that He saw Satan falling like lightning from heaven. Lightning is like the SS Nazi symbol, also known as the 'Siegrune' (sign of victory). Again the hissing snake, the snake that wishes to rise up to become God. In Jewish tradition Heaven is seen as image of the tetragrammaton, as confirmed in the Lord's Prayer: *"Our Father, who art in Heaven, blessed be*

thy NAME". It's not at all stupid to see in this verse from the Evangelist Luke the hissing snake that falls out of God's NAME. The usual meaning of the letter shin is that it stands for Shaddai, the name by which God for the very first time revealed himself: "*God Almighty*". (Ex. 6:2-3) It also represents fire, the image of the Holy Spirit. And the letter shin is written on the prayer boxes (tefillin) in which the words of the Sh'ma are hidden. In the Jewish tradition we will, of course, find no direct reference to Jesus because his coming was still shrouded in darkness. But there are indications. I quote from Drach:

«« In the "Chapters of R. Eliéser", a highly praised book placed by the rabbis on the same level as the Talmud itself, the following is to be found at the beginning of Chapter III: "*Before the creation of this world took place, there was nothing other than God himself, **He and his NAME.***" »» (Vol. 1, pp. 410 and 413)

Drach says that many rabbis have converted to Christianity after having read the Zohar. We have seen already that the Zohar is older than the Talmud and therefore it's authority is higher. Here is a quote from the Zohar (taken from Drach):

«« Zohar, part II, fol. 19, col. 74-75 – 1st ch. (of the tefillin), called 'Justify my first-born': "*...is the heavenly mystery that represents all four letters that come out of naught (Hebr. : where?).*" »»

It follows from these two quotations – and in the knowledge that Jesus is the first-born, even before creation began – that the supreme way of writing Jesus, in whom we believe, is with the shin right in the middle of God's full holy NAME. Naturally the Jews, who do not believe in Jesus Christ, will protest, since it touches the heart of the matter. Hence, it is to be expected that after the Jews have accepted Jesus as their Lord and Saviour, they will start to announce this to the world in a loud voice. We should acknowledge that there is an alternative and acceptable way of writing Jesus in Hebrew, namely Yeshua (יֵשׁוּעַ), or yod, shin, waw, ayin. This is illustrated with the following example, using the equidistant letter system to form new words and sentences: if we start with the first yod (י) in the Book Genesis, which is in the first word 'bereshit', and then count every 521st letter, we get "*Yeshua yahkol*", which means 'Jesus is able (to have power)'.

The discussion is actually about the following. If Jesus is God, then the Hebrew way of writing with the shin in the middle of the tetragrammaton is the correct way. If Jesus is not God, then this way of writing is prohibited. The question is that the Jewish scribes are very familiar with the enclosure of the shin in the tetragrammaton and yet continue to state that this points at God's imitator, Satan. Their conclusion doesn't tally because it conflicts with Jeremiah 23:6, where the Messiah is called "*Yahweh our Justifier*". They twist and turn in the strangest manner in order to attempt to prove that this verse is not about Jesus. Fortunately, however, a turning point is imminent, for the next verse in the Book of Jeremiah refers to the return of God's people to the land of their fathers, an exceedingly joyous fact that we have been allowed to witness in our days.

31.149 – The Historical Development

The current use and composition of the Sh'ma prayer goes back to the 2nd century AD. The historical development that led to this form is, according to the Encyclopædia Judaica (1971, 1992), difficult to trace. It is assumed, according to the same source, that a form of the prayer was retained for the priestly caste in Old Testament times. As far as I can see, this is connected to the expression in Exodus 3:15 (with a different application of vowels): "*My eternal NAME must be kept hidden.*" In fact, that NAME contains the hidden knowledge of the divine Trinity, knowledge which was buried in its fullness together with Simeon the Just, the last of the zugots or pairs. This Simeon, mentioned in the New Testament, is not the same as the famed Simeon of the Talmud who was one of the last of the Great Synagogue; he lived from ca. 370 until 270 before Christ.²²⁹⁾ Simeon

the Just of the New Testament was possibly the grandson of the honourable Hillel the Elder. According to the Talmud, Shammai was together with this Hillel the last of the zugots, of those who kept the flickering flame of knowledge burning, but I disagree. During the “Presentation in the Temple” it was Simeon the zugot who embraced Jesus in his arms. (Lk. 2:21-34) His peer, Jochanan ben Zakkai, had already died. Afterwards the Sh’ma was introduced to the people in a twisted interpretation to imprint on their minds that it was impossible that Jesus could be God-made-man, even though the religious authorities were not ignorant of the oral tradition in the matter; they even forbade to pronounce Jesus’ name, which was very current then; the criminal Barrabas was also named Jesus. So, they must have known about ‘the Jehoshua’, which also fits Jeremiah 23:6 where the Messiah is called ‘Jahwe our Redeemer’. People were nevertheless allowed to call Jesus ‘Jesus of Galilee’ or ‘Jesus of Nazareth’, as happened during the incident when the servant girl recognized the disciple Peter, who then denied his master. (Mt. 26:69-75) It was precisely this addition of ‘Gallilean’ that turned Jesus Christ into a common man.

The evolution of the concept of Holy Trinity

The God, revealed in his interventions in history, is the transcendent God subsisting in three substantial modes of his One nature. This identity is not stated in this explicit formulation in the Bible. The very word Trinity is not in the inspired Scriptures, nor does it occur in the Apostolic nor Nicene Creed, even though their three-part structure emerges when they speak separately of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Tertullian, who died around the year 220 was the first to apply the term Trinity to God, nearly 150 years after Matthew’s baptismal formula. Another 200 years were to pass, filled with much struggle and serious conflict before the first two Ecumenical Councils formulated the implications of the revelation. Belief that the Son [Council of Nicea in 325] and the Holy Spirit [Council of Constantinople in the year 381] are truly God and equal to the Father in all things pertaining to the divine nature was formally affirmed by the universal Church as the legitimate understanding of what had been once revealed. There was a major development of dogma in the course of this long and often painful examination into the meaning of the economics of the Trinity. Great care was taken to assure that this unfolding of implicit content of revelation did not take an arbitrary course, but was faithful to the revelation brought by Jesus and confided to his disciples.

By the Abbot John Eudes Bamberger O.C.S.O. (1926-2020)
Taken from the website of the Abbey of the Genesee (in Upstate New York)
Dom John was the 4th Abbot of the Abbey for a period of over 30 years

I finish with a quote from Hymen Polano from “The Talmud: Selections” (1876):

«« Simeon [of the 4th and 3rd centuries BC] is renowned for his familiarity with the Law [Torah], for his services as president and member of the Great Senate [Synagogue], and for the efficient manner in which he strengthened the religious fervour of the people and participated in all their doings and institutions. He officiated as high priest for forty years, and himself announced the approach of his death on completing the services on the Day of Atonement [Yom Kippur]. (...) Posterity honoured him as the most holy among men, and it has been

229) Ecclesiasticus/Wisdom of Sirach 50 (excerpts): “Simeon the High Priest, the son of Onias, who in his life propped up the house, and in his days fortified the Temple. (...) He took care of his nation, and delivered it from destruction. He prevailed to enlarge the city, and obtained glory in his conversation with the people. (...) He shone in his days as the morning star in the midst of a cloud, and as the full moon [by night]. As the sun when it shineth so did he shine in the Temple of God.”

asserted that during his life visible tokens of God's favour never ceased. His grandchildren, however, deserted Judaism entirely, and set the example for those actions which brought upon Israel the troublous times of Antiochus Epiphanes.

It was shortly after Simeon's death, and in view of the degeneracy of the people, that the pious resolved that only the priests should use God's Holy NAME.

The four letters of the sacred NAME were substituted by [the neutral term] "the Name" [in Hebrew: HaShem], and the former was [from then on] only uttered [in its original form] by the priests when they concluded the daily sacrificial service and pronounced the blessing on the people [as mentioned in Numbers 6:24-26]. [The Sacred NAME was also uttered] by the high priest on the Day of Atonement. »» (pp. 212-13)

Sources: This article has borrowed from the website of "**Jews for Jesus**". See their magazine Issues 1:8 / July 1981, featuring the article "**Jewishness and the Trinity**" by **Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum**. See also under theological issues: "**Don't Christians Believe in Three Gods?**" / Jan. 2005, via "questions & answers".



Praying Israelis with phylacteries, as prescribed by Ex. 13:9, Deut. 6:8 and 11:18. See on their forehead the Tefillin. The meaning of Tefillin is not apparent from the Biblical text and needs an explanation to be understood. The Sh'ma is hidden in the Tefillin itself. The Sh'ma, in its turn, contains a hiddenness (the concept of the Holy Trinity), which is not obvious from the Biblical text and needs an explanation.

APPENDIX 23

• The deeper meaning of Ichud/Echad

The following note is an elaboration by me of a text by **Liliane Warris** (Bruges), as published in “Openbaring, symboliek van het Hebreeuws” (Revelation – symbolism in the Hebrew language) – Servire Katwijk # 1981 (pp. 29-35).



«« An extremely important word, both as word and as number, is **echad** (aleph, cheth, daleth), meaning ‘one’, written with the letter values **1 + (8 + 4)**. This Hebrew word indicates ‘composite unit’ and is in fact a combination of One plus 12. Thirteen as such represents a divine number.

In the word ‘echad’ (1 + 12) we clearly see the 12 as a representation of time and measurement of time (annual cycle), which are tied to the all-embracing One, the aleph. Together they express the real Oneness that exists only in God and the harmony between temporality (12) and eternity (1). We find this beautifully emphasised in the well-known text of Deuteronomy 6:4, the Sh’mā: “**Hear Israel, Yahweh is our God; Yahweh is One (Echad).**”

If we omit from echad the first letter aleph we get a word with a totally different structure and meaning. The word **chad** (cheth, daleth) then appears, meaning one-sidedness and something that also suggests the existence of another side. If the numerical value of 12 is thus created by omitting the aleph, both word and number become an expression of only a single side. It is the tangible side determined by that which we observe in this material world, bound by time and space. And thus not a oneness in the sense of a link between the visible and the invisible but a one-sided approach which refers exclusively to the material or tangible.

It is remarkable that Jacob’s twelve sons, representing the basic structure of the people of Israel, show the same composition of 8 + 4 (cheth, daleth), namely eight sons of Lea and four of Rachel, whereby the actual meaning is done justice only by the appearance of the One, the One who is the Messiah born of Israel who at some time was to restore the balance between the temporary, the material, and the timeless, the invisible, since the creation as a material unit (the twelve) is not perfect without the involvement of the Creator himself (the One). Indeed, in the usual Masoretic interpretation we read: “*In the beginning of God’s work of creation as regards the heavens and the earth...*” (Gen 1:1). This expression can be understood in the sense of God’s creative activity, which is not determined by a point in time. But ‘then’ – at that exceptional moment spoken of – He was occupied in calling the heavens and the earth into existence. The first verse incidentally, can also be translated: “**By** (means of) the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” instead of “**In** the beginning”. And that beginning, in and with God, is of course the Word.

It should be noted that a ‘beginning’ is a human concept, for in God there is neither beginning nor end, also with regard to his creation, which has neither beginning nor end, because all that exists in the past and all possible futures came into existence at the same time, in a blink of an eye. In this sense, the expression that the universe came into existence so many years ago is a fallacious approach.

It goes without saying that from this perspective the Big Bang cannot be; and it happens to be the case that the cosmological observations do not support the Big Bang theory.

It catches the eye that the first letter of the creation account and of the Bible itself is a 'beth' (our 'b'), but it is in fact the aleph as image of God from whom all proceeds. Nevertheless, as image of the Invisible, this letter, without further alteration to the meaning of the word, has been withdrawn from view. In this context it is very interesting to note that the Talmud (Meghilla) states that the 72 translators of the Greek version of the Bible, the Septuagint, were driven to change the sequence of the first three words of Genesis from "Bereshit Elohim bara" into "Elohim bara bereshit". The reason for this change was, chas v'shalom (may God bring mercy and peace upon us to prevent this from happening), that the work of creation would not be ascribed to a being called 'reshit'. Now it is so that Elohim begins with the letter aleph. The new word sequence means: "God generated the principle or beginning, creating the heavens and the earth". 'Bereshit' can be read as 'Beth-resith', which is the second principle or beginning (within the Trinity) since beth is the second letter of the Hebrew alphabet and 'principle' is simply the translation of 'reshit'. In a similar way, 'Adam' can be read as 'Aleph-Dam', meaning 'God in the blood' or 'Life in the blood', or the Anointed One. 'Reshit' also means first-born. And Jesus is God's firstling. And, as everyone knows, the firstling or firstfruits have to be sacrificed to God. Why? Because they belong to God from whom everything proceeds. The sacrifice of the first-born is therefore a tribute to God's omnipotence and glory.



The Sh'ma from Deuteronomy 6:4

Now the Lord Jesus, in his abode among us, is the expression of this Invisible that has adopted tangibility. Out of his Love for Man, He is in this world our close companion, for the Word says: "I am with you always, even until the end of the world" (Mt. 28:20)

Of interest is the manner in which the Hebrew of the **Sh'ma** is written. As seen in the image above, the last letter of the first word and the last letter of the last word of Deuteronomy 6:4 are usually written larger in the Hebrew Bibles. These letters are the Ayin (70) and the Daleth (4), together pronounced as **êd** or **ad**, which in the one case means **witness** and in the other **infinity/eternity**. And thus there are 70 witnesses and the 4 evangelists, who were sent out by Jesus to win souls for God's Kingdom. (Lk. 10:1)

We have just seen in the echad itself the relation of 1 + 12 is hidden. We see this repeated in Jesus (1) and his 12 apostles, who were sent out just like the 70. Together with Jesus they represent a fullness, which as a composite unity of 13 reaches beyond the criteria of this world.

Another word, based on the concept of a composite unity with a value of 13 is the Hebrew word for 'love', **ahawah** (aleph, hee, beth, hee): **1 + 5 + 2 + 5 (= 13)**. From this, One + 5 as against Two + 5, we may conclude, or even more so, we have to concede, that the most sublime expression of unity is love as it is 'experienced' through the body. That body consists of a individuality but also of a dual oneness: my body and also soul, me and the other, and of course Christ who is head of the body, which is the Church (Ef. 5:23), and not to forget Israel, God's spouse (Hos. 2:18-22). In absence of the mutual giving of love, the longing for the giving and the certainty that the other experiences the giving as happiness and the fulfilling of his being, there can be no thought of unity and love as seen from God's vantage point. Without the mutual giving, a connection is only possible between 'form'

and 'form', in which the concept of 'love' cannot attain its essential function of complementarity. Oneness in variety (1 over against 2), indeed, can exist and function only when opposites or contrasts meet and complement one another. The finding of each other is made easier because there is also equality in the 5 over against the 5. The bonding is a two-ness over against one another, in for instance marriage as a reflection of the divine (combinative) oneness. This reveals itself when Christ's followers are called his spouse (Gal. 3:27-28, Ef. 5:31-32), the fruits of which are given as divine sparks in many facets through time. And because true love is a reflection of the divine Love, as shown in the experience between man and wife, then – if such a love is aspired – a connection will be made with the One from whom everything and everyone originated and whose image-bearer we are meant to be, image-bearer of God in this hitherto broken world.

Put briefly, love in one-ness is an image of that which in God functions as the harmony of opposites, through which from the mutual giving and preparedness to accept, the joy of the unity is automatically confirmed. Within our present world this divine love and Oneness cannot possibly be seen and experienced in ceaseless fullness and intensity, with the accompanying fruits. Nevertheless, the concept of echad reveals itself 'here', in our reality, and should be regarded as a priceless opportunity that has to be seized with both hands!

But that which functions in God as an existing Oneness functions in man in phases, in separate moments, because we have to learn to undergo the joy of oneness time and time again. And so we see that the number 13, just as the number 12, occurs many times in the chronological, thus sequential account of the Old and New Testaments.

One of the most moving examples of this is to be found in Exodus 34:6-7, where Moses is confronted with the "Thirteen Attributes of Divine Mercy" (see Wikipedia) or the "Shelosh-'Esreh Middot", that are shown in the form of a composite unity as one side of God: *"Then I will take away My hand and you shall see My back; but My face shall not be seen."* (Ex. 33:23) Both sides constitute the total, expressed in the (inexpressible) NAME – Yahweh – consisting of the letters yod, hee, waw, hee, or $10 + 5 + 6 + 5 (= 2 \times 13)$.

The mention of the NAME in Exodus 34:6 and again in the following verse, is part of the list of divine attributes, and happens as if this repetition were not deliberately. Yet it has a deep meaning, as indeed all information, even the slightest, provided in the Bible. According to the great Talmudist Rashi, this relates to God's fourth attribute that represents compassion as counterpart of justice. The inseparable combination of compassion & justice is a so-called binomium and is part of the Sh'ma. It belongs to Him who forgives iniquity but by no means clears the guilty. (verse 7) This can be understood from Yahweh's traveling with each of his children on the difficult road of life, in a togetherness both before and after the original fall from grace and this is still true today, on a journey that takes Man coming from his Origin back to his Origin once again.

These two aspects of Yahweh as the merciful, but as the righteous one too, are presented to the people of Israel as belonging to God as an inseparable and (composite) Unity, who is Essentiality and Inaccessibility itself, according to the description in Paul's first letter to Timothy (6:16): *"The King of Kings and the Lord of Lords who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see".* »»

Thus we have come to understand that it is only through the Son, who lets the Father be known to us, that we can reach towards the Father. By his dying on the Cross He conquered the power of death thereby becoming the gate through which all salvation flows to us. It is «the» sacrifice, «the» sacrament. **His suffering built the bridge** between our side and the other side, between the twelve, which is an image of the body in which Jesus took shape, and the One: Father of eternity (Abi-ad).

APPENDIX 24

• The Function of the Holy Spirit in the Holy Trinity

The Holy Trinity is Consubstantial

Consubstantial (Latin: consubstantialis) was coined by Church Father Tertullianus (ca 155 - ca 240) in ch. 44 of his “Adversus Hermogenem”, used to translate the Greek ‘homooousios’. Consubstantial connotes that the divine persons of the Holy Trinity – consisting of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost – are of ‘one substance’. The Son is therefore of the Father’s own being, from which the Holy Spirit also eternally ‘proceeds’. As the three are of one nature, but each with his own mutually agreed upon task in the economy of God, it is necessarily true that the Holy Trinity is fully and unrestricted present in each separate person of the Holy Trinity. And so the Holy Trinity is not the veneration of three Gods for that would imply that each one is essentially and substantially different, which is not the case.

This postscript is taken from “La vie dans L’Esprit Saint” (Life in the Holy Spirit) by Concepción Cabrera de Armida (Conchita), an anthology compiled by Dominique Reyre – Éd. de l’Emmanuel, Paris # 2009 (pp.36-39). The ‘venerable’ Conchita (1862-1937), also known as the Great Conchita, was the mother of nine children and came from the better class of Mexico. She left an immense oeuvre (60,000 pages), a kind of diary that she wrote down in consultation with God.

«« I began to pray, but Jesus interrupted me to make me understand something that He absolutely wanted to tell me: “*The Holy Spirit, my daughter, comes from the eternal gaze of complacency between the Father and the Son [the ‘filioque’ thus, the Son before the Holy Ghost], it is even to angels a look of incomprehensible delight which is taking place in reclusion.*” When I heard the word ‘reclusion’ I suddenly saw an eternity, a desert which is not uninhabited but filled with God, with God alone, He who is everything and lacks nothing, He who does not need a witness to be happy... I saw Him as the fountain of all conceivable and inconceivable happiness in this eternal and silent contemplation! I don’t know why, it was this word of ‘reclusion’ that impressed me and unleashed this vision in me... and a torrent of ideas of which I am only giving a pale impression. Jesus went on and said: “*From this look of unparalleled pure love, from this reflection of all perfections, springs uncreated love, eternal love, the ideal of all loves, Love personified in the Holy Spirit! This is its origin, which is divine and eternal and without beginning, for in the beginning the Holy Spirit was in the Father and the Son, united in this Love which is their joy and self-fulfillment.*” I then asked the Lord [Jesus]: “*If the Father and the Word have begotten the Holy Spirit, how could He beget You, You the Word made flesh?*” And the Lord answered: “*I am the product of the Holy Spirit insofar as I am the fruit of the love which alone can work such a miracle in the bosom of a creature, even though she was immaculate like Mary. The Incarnation is the fruit of Love. Understand*

well that the Spirit of love, that is the Holy Spirit does not produce the Word as a divine Person distinct from Him, but that He initiates love in the Word which prompts Him to be active in the souls, to be united with them, and incited Him to the incarnation, and also to live and grow in them..."

I did not understand much of all this, but I remember feeling this gaze of Jesus upon me, acting like a purifying bath in preparation for his coming. Oh! How Jesus cleanses without delay the soul that loves Him! And who seeks Him! Who desires these love encounters! This gaze of Jesus is the reflection of another gaze, of the intense gaze between the Father and the Son, a gaze that the Holy Spirit gave birth to. This gaze is a bit like those thick glasses that, when placed in the sun, light a fire, a fire that originates from the sun through the glass. It is in this way that I try to imagine how the mutual gaze of the Father and the Son produces the Holy Spirit like the hot fire of the glass and the sun, without a beginning nor end. The Lord grants me this image so that I can understand and reflect a little on the mystery of the Holy Trinity. And the clearer the mystery becomes, the more I feel absorbed in it. This image looks like something that makes me glimpse and love the Holy Trinity more. I never want to lose the memory of that eternal gaze, which the Lord says embraces all the loves of Heaven and Earth, which also springs from the tabernacle, piercing me to the depths of my soul like a ray of light and fire... Ah! I wouldn't know how not to instantly become a saint under that gaze!

I asked the Lord a question about his relationship to the Holy Spirit:
"Lord, it looks like You are in charge of the Holy Spirit when You promise to send us the Holy Spirit and ask your Father to send Him to us... One would say that You are above Him."

Jezus answered: *"The Holy Spirit, the Father the Son are but one in their divinity. The Holy Spirit dwells in Me; my Spirit is Him. He manifests himself according to God's plan, according to the glory He wishes to receive from his creatures, which in turn depends on the gifts He wishes to bestow upon them. Understand that the Holy Spirit, who accomplished the Incarnation, was to enjoy its fruits, that is, the Church; so it is out of delicacy that when I left this world during my ascension into heaven, once my mission of atonement was accomplished on this earth, I promised to send Him, so as to give Him what was his due. The role of the Holy Spirit is to enlighten, give meaning to, ignite, strengthen souls and give them the life of grace. Love Him and commit yourself to let Him be loved and rest assured that before the end of time my realm will draw thousands of souls to Me. Before that happens there will be a ruthless struggle between the two spirits, but it is the Holy Spirit who prevails. That struggle has already begun. He is cruel and dogged and against my Church, but because the Holy Spirit is by her side, she will triumph and pull thousands of souls away from Hell. It is not only an inner struggle, but it will also affect the Church and the [religious] communities - Satan's favorite ground - and the souls. This is why the Holy Spirit is deploying all his strength in the fight to gain the victory. It is the last fight the world must wage, but it will be terrible, and to endure one must receive from the Holy Spirit: faith, hope and love." »»»*

To Believe with a Hebrew Benchmark

The effect of the Hebrew Benchmark on preaching, liturgy and ethics



Here is a plea to read the Bible, being aware that it is a book written entirely by believing Jews. It is their message to the Gentiles, to the peoples of the earth and is certainly not meant only for themselves. This means that the words of the Bible have their source in the Jewish tradition and therefore their basic meaning also lies in the Hebrew tongue. By focusing on this we will come to a truer and better understanding of what God wants to communicate to us in his Word.

By the Dutch emeritus pastor Bart Gijsbertsen, with permission of author

32.150 – The Hebrew language

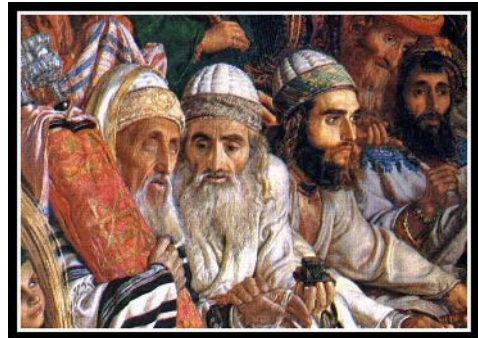
To expand on this, I turn to a great thinker, who taught me exactly what believing with a Hebrew benchmark means, and that is Friedrich-Wilhelm Marquardt, who was professor of systematic theology in Berlin. Seven hefty volumes comprise the dogmatics he bequeathed to university and church upon his death in 2002. Friedrich-Wilhelm Marquardt thinks through all Bible explanations with a new perspective, taking completely seriously how Israel sees itself, thus paying much attention to rabbinic theology, the explanation in the shul (house of learning), with of course the Hebrew language, and thus also Hebrew thinking, as reference or benchmark.

In a language you also hear a way of thinking. There are languages, such as English, in which the subject is usually mentioned first and then the verb: “John walks and dances on the street”. So we are first interested in who it is about, and then what he/she says or does. But there are also languages in which this is the other way around. “He walks and dances in the street, John.” Attention first focuses on what is happening and then the question arises: who does that? You may think: ‘so what?’ But that makes a world of difference. If the subject comes first, then you fill it in with what you know about it. “Oh,

I already know who said it or who did it,” the Dutchman actually says. And so he already has a prejudiced view of what is to come.

But in classical Hebrew, the verbs determine how to understand the subject. First look seriously at what is said and done here, and only then: ‘Hey, so that’s who you are, that’s how you act?’ Marquardt points out: *“Our entire Christian theology has always first defined who God is or who Jesus is. Ask any person you meet on the street: ‘What do you think of when thinking of God?’, and in no time you will hear something like ‘omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent...’”* The question is whether we then still be able to perceive how different the Biblical God is. Actually very different from what we presupposedly knew. In Biblical Hebrew the emphasis is slightly different, God is known by his actions, especially his actions through history with his people, and yet that makes a world of difference.

The Dutch Reformed preacher Kornelis Heiko Miskotte (1894-1976), in his impressive book “When the gods keep silent”, devoted a special section to what he called *“a great cleaning up.”* First clean up everything that comes to mind when you see the word ‘God’. And then start all over again. Then listen to how the Old Testament talks about God. First, pay attention to the verbs. Hear how relational they are. Hear how He introduces Himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Purely relational! How He introduces Himself to Moses and his people: *“I am YHWH, compassionate, merciful, longsuffering, abounding in friendship and in faithfulness...”* (Ex. 34:6). Again: how relational! That’s different from ‘omniscient, omnipresent...’ [In conclusion, there is no question that the relational aspect is paramount in Hebrew. It is therefore no coincidence that Gerry Altman, someone with a typically Jewish name, concludes his book “The Ascent of Babel” with the phrase: *“Language, quite simply, is a widow through which we can reach out and touch each other’s minds. Anyone can reach through it – regardless of race, regardless of creed. It is the most intimate act we can ever perform.”*]



Finding the Child – William Hunt

There are so many words that we connect with ‘God’ that cannot even be thought of in Hebrew! Take a word like ‘to resign’ that plays such an important role in many religious circles: man chooses, God disposes. Yes, one must resign to that. However, in the Bible - 66 books! - that word or one of its synonyms does not appear anywhere; just look in a concordance. ‘Resign’ does not exist in Biblical Hebrew thought, [though the opposite ‘resist’ does]. Resignation is not part of that faith experience and faith language. The theology of resignation, [a thoroughly passive attitude], belongs to the Pagan religions. Never connect that with the LORD.

What also happens when we take Biblical Hebrew thinking as a benchmark can be characterized as a gain in concreteness in all our speaking and thinking. The Bible does not think in concepts, notions or models, but much more in ‘flesh and blood’. Bible language does not want delve into abstraction. For example, the concept of ‘thinking’ is always connected with deeds, works. Word/speaking and deed/doing virtually coincide, and are the same word ‘dabar’. ‘No words but deeds’ cannot be said in Hebrew: ‘no dabar but dabar’. Thinking sec, by itself, is not known in Hebrew. YHWH does not mean ‘I am’, like He is sitting there somewhere, but: ‘I will be there, namely with you, as I will be.’ This concreteness creates a very different worldview than we are used to. Christians sometimes seem to do their best to transcend this earthly reality and ascend to an ideal heavenly reality. We have borrowed this from [dualistic] Greek thought, among other

things. But Hebrew thinking, on the contrary, chooses the concrete earthly reality as the reality in which God made his covenant with his people. God opts for earth, calling Himself with names of people, like the God of Abraham. Biblical language is more earth-centered and focused on how we should live, rather than heaven-centered.

In addition, Marquardt mentions the Hebrew awareness of the relational, interpersonal. In tangible existence I do not dwell alone. There is a community around me: a mother, a father, a family, relatives, a village, a society, for Biblical man: a covenant community. That community is more important than the individual; that community forms the framework, the connection (the Covenant) in which the individual is included and in which he finds the fabric of life and its purpose, his vocation as well. The basis of this covenant community is not a nationalistic or paternalistic or legalistic systemic compulsion, but the basis of this community is as-ever: learning and teaching a dynamic Torah and Talmud, [as opposed to immovable and static].

Consequently, the Hebrew lifestyle can begin little with a 'cogito ergo sum' (I think, therefore I am) à la René Descartes. Rather it feels at ease with a 'cogitamen...' We think and so we act this way, and intervene in a certain way. Each person is an responding person, a responsible person who knows of his own task and calling, but within the broad framework of the task and calling of the whole community. Those who read and explain the Bible in this way, will notice how in this way ordinary earthly life and all creation becomes important and he will start to discover what God wants us to do in it.

That concreteness and that relationality is also striking in the meaning of all kinds of Biblical words, which I will now look at in more detail, such as the word 'truth'. What truth means is actually understood by us from the Greek. The Greek 'a-lètheia' means 'without concealment'. We therefore like to speak of the naked truth, which is there to be found. This truth seeks above all the revelation of facts. Truth is then called what is in accordance with the facts. The Hebrew thinker, however, finds this 'truth' relative. Truth in the Hebrew idiom means above all: being trustworthy to one's fellow man, being a good neighbour to another. It is not the facts that are decisive, but the neighbour who counts on me. Suppose I am hiding hunted people from the government, yet, when questioned, firmly deny it. Where many would accuse me of lying (after all, I am contradicting the facts), in the Hebrew sense this is precisely the highest truth: for I prove to be very trustworthy to those neighbours who shelter with me and count on me. [The Ten Commandments therefore state that I must not bear false witness against my neighbour. It does not say without ado "thou shalt not lie".]

What 'mercy' or compassion essentially is becomes immediately clear in Hebrew because the same word also means 'womb'. So the benchmark of the normative word mercy lies, as it were, in the womb. That is, mercy is actually that activity by which a life that cannot yet exist or stand on its own is enclosed by the womb of another human being. "*Who do you think was the neighbor of the man who fell into the hands of robbers?*" asks Jesus at the conclusion of his parable. The obvious answer: 'Who showed him mercy; who took him in his lap.' True compassion comes first of all from an inward compassion, an action from 'the womb' to save what cannot live by itself, and thus shows himself truly a neighbour. [And is it not remarkable that Psalm 85 says that mercy and truth meet each other, that is, that the one cannot exist without the other.]

Or take the word 'love'. We mainly put a feeling in it. Therefore, we do not understand how love can be enforced in Hebrew: "*You shall love God above all things and your neighbor as yourself.*" Surely you cannot force love? Yet the simple fact lies there that 'love' in Hebrew is a commandment from which essentially all the solutions to our problems follow. So Biblical love, [thus also God's love], is not so much about something to be felt, it is not about loving and liking someone else, it is about a way of doing things.

So you can even help your enemy upright when fallen; you can give him a cup of water when thirsty. [That does not mean that you have suddenly come to find him sympathetic, but that you see in him a fellow human being, a fact that trumps everything else.]

I could go on and on about all the words and concepts from the Biblical context. Take 'righteousness', a recurring theme, which has nothing to do with the word justice - a word from Roman law - but gives us the task of doing the right thing to people. This stems from a faith that is independent of an oral creed or a particular doctrine, but is founded on mutual trust that makes you live in a certain way, [an attitude from which peace springs. Thus it appears, again Psalm 85, that righteousness and peace kiss each other. Psalm 71 reveals that God 'does' justice by rescuing me from the hands of my enemy, who snarlingly cries: "*No one will rescue him!*" What a deep thought.]

Even concepts like death and life can be understood differently from the Hebrew benchmark than the Westerner tends to fill in. From the Biblical perspective, they are not primarily biochemical concepts, but find their content primarily in the social sphere, within the framework of the covenant community. If people walk with God and each other according to the principles of the Torah, then that is life. If you do not live that way, then death follows.

32.151 – In Conclusion

Thus, I have tried to indicate what I mean by 'believing' with a Hebrew benchmark. By this, I am not so much attempting to find out Israel's future from the Bible, something that interests many Christians. Let alone that I am going to dictate to the people of Israel what they should believe. "*God will never bruise his truth, but forever remember his covenant.*" Those words of Psalm 105 resonate in the synagogue to this day, and they seem significant enough to me. The synagogue itself does exegesis of that Psalm.

I do immerse myself in rabbinic tradition and Jewish views, seeking to learn how Israel understands itself. I enjoy contemporary Jewish thinkers such as Abraham Joshua Heschel, Pinchas Lapide, Elie Wiesel, Viktor Frankl and nowadays Jonathan Sacks. But already in my first books in the 1990s, that is not where my focus lies. I was startled by the denigrating remarks of Christian religious doctrine about gentile peoples in general and Jews in particular. As a pastor and theologian, I try to correct thinking errors in this and renew our own life of faith. "*To believe with a Hebrew benchmark*" is what interviewer Reinier Gosker called it, and I thought that sums it up nicely.

I also realize that as a pastor, I am talking late in the day, perhaps too late, even if it were to come to a reassessment within the church. But who will get to hear it among those millions who have long since said goodbye to the church?

Last summer I was one of thousands who visited the Liebfrauenkirche in Trier. You can see most people walking through it like through a museum. At the main entrance I was struck once again by what I see in so many of these old cathedrals, the statues facing each other of church and synagogue: on the left the church with cross and sacramental cup, symbolized by a stately Mary, the beloved lady (whom everyone has forgotten is a Jewess), and on the right a defeated female figure symbolizing the synagogue or all of the Jewish people (so basically, the true Mary, Miriam in her own language). But Miriam is depicted there with a broken lance, and in Trier even with a blindfold for eyes, and a crown tilting from her head. So the Christian church is triumphantly depicted facing a beaten and defeated synagogue, sprung from the DNA of pride that Pastor Hendrik Vreekamp so fought against. Not surprisingly, that also shaped the thinking and beliefs of my Italian daughter-in-law and with her so many others.

In what I experience as very problematic there in Trier and everywhere else, the following is at play. While Vreekamp thought and acted in a very religious setting, I, on the other hand, live in a secularized world and, in addition to my work as a pastor, also acted as a consultant in society. Those people who walk through that cathedral, as if through a museum, at most are connecting that building with some general thoughts about personal salvation, as they remember it from their religion classes. But they have no idea that - no matter how secularized they are - they have the haughty DNA of centuries of Christian preaching in their genes. And so they have no defense against the anti-Semitism that rears its head today. They have never been confronted with an ethic from Biblical-Hebrew roots. They connect Jesus with individual salvation of the soul and are unable to connect Him with something as great as the relationship between Israel and the nations and between the nations themselves. And it is precisely this defense, this ethic and this view of those relationships, which are desperately needed in today's world politics, if ever we are to provide a future on earth for our posterity.

And as for all those cathedrals up to and including the 12th century "Bovenkerk" (Superior Church), in my own hometown of Kampen (north-central Netherlands), I would like them to hang a sign at the entrance saying that those statues of the triumphant Mary facing the defeated Miriam are there as a warning, so that never again we will dare to think so arrogantly and exclusively!

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